

AMTIX!
A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.6 April 1986
£1
MONTHLY SOFTWARE REVIEW FOR THE
AMSTRAD COMPUTERS
Spaceborne Action from CRL and
TAU CETI
Airborne Action from Mirrorsoft and
STRIKE FORCE HARRIER
Previews
THE EIDOLON
(Lucasfilm/Activision)
THE YOUNG ONES
(Orpheus)
FAIRLIGHT
(The Edge)
PLUS Fantastic Prizes!
THE 1985 READERS AWARDS

# WOW

Have I been playing games!

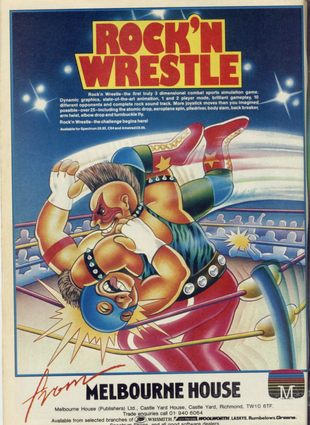
8.95

FRANKIE

GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

FREE! SPECIAL LIVE RECORDING OF




ROCK'N WRESTLE
Rock'n Wrestle–the first truly 3 dimensional combat sports simulation game. Dynamic graphics, state-of-the-art animation, 1 and 2 player mode, brilliant gameplay, 10 different opponents and complete rock sound track. More joystick moves than you imagined possible–over 25–including the atomic drop, aeroplane spin, piledriver, body slam, back breaker, arm twist, elbow drop and turnbuckle fly.
Rock'n Wrestle–the challenge begins here!
Available for Spectrum £8.95, C64 and Amstrad £9.95.
from
MELBOURNE HOUSE
M
Melbourne House (Publishers) Ltd., Castle Yard House, Castle Yard, Richmond, TW10 6TF.
Trade enquiries call 01· 940 6064
Available from selected branches of Boots, WHSMITH, John Menzies, WOOLWORTH, LASKYS, Rumbelows, Greens.
Spectrum Shops, and all good software dealers






ISSUE 6 APRIL 1986

**Publishing Executive** Roger Kean
**Editor** Malcolm Harding
**Technical Editor** Franco Frey
**Art Editor** Oliver Frey
**Art Director** Richard Shiner
**Production Controller** David Western
**Software Editor** Robin Candy
**Adventure/Strategy Editor** Sean Masterson
**Software Reviewers** Gary Liddon, Mark Peters, Catherine Rees, Dominic Handy, Peter Lewis, Michael Dunn
**Contributing Writers** Graeme Kidd, Chris Honey, Roy Jones, Ben Stone
**Production** Matthew Uffindell, Gordon Druce, Tony Lorton
**Advertisement Manager** Roger Bennett
**Subscriptions** Denise Roberts
**Mail Order** Carol Kinsey



**AMTIX! Magazine** is published monthly by **Newsfield Ltd**, 1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ

☎ Subscriptions **0584 5851**
☎ Mail Order **0584 5620**
☎ Editorial **0584 5852**
☎ Advertising Information and bookings **0584 5852** and 0584 4603 (direct line). Roger Bennett (direct line and answer service **0386 833033**

Colour origination by Scan Studios, Wallace Rd, London N1; Printed in England by Redwood Web Offset, Yeoman Way, Trowbridge, Wiltshire; Distribution by **COMAG**, Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7QE

**Subscriptions**: 12 issues £15.00 post included (UK Mainland); **Europe**, 12 issues £22.00 post included. Outside Europe by arrangement in writing. Please check for special offers within the magazine.



NP
*A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION*
**Cover by Oliver Frey**

## TOP GAMES APRIL



## APRIL SPECIALS



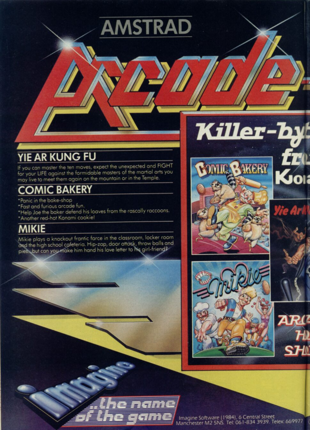
## AMTIX! COMPETITIONS



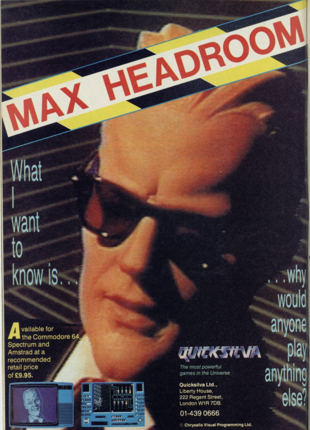
## THE MAIN HEADINGS



April 17th is a day to look forward to: You'll be able to buy your copy of AMTIX! Issue 7 . . .


AMSTRAD
Arcade
YIE AR KUNG FU
If you can master the ten moves, expect the unexpected and FIGHT for your LIFE against the formidable masters of the martial arts you may live to meet them again on the mountain or in the Temple.
COMIC BAKERY
*Panic in the bake-shop
*Fast and furious arcade fun.
*Help Joe the baker defend his loaves from the rascally raccoons.
*Another red-hot Konami cookie!
MIKIE
Mikie plays a knockout frantic farce in the classroom, locker room and the high school cafeteria. Hip-zap, door attack, throw balls and pies...but can you make him hand his love letter to his girl-friend?
Comic Bakery
Mikie
imagine
...the name of the game
Imagine Software (1984), 6 Central Street Manchester M2 5NS. Tel: 061-834 3939. Telex: 669977


-action
ces of fun
PING PONG
HYPER SPORTS
PING PONG
You can almost feel the tension of the big match breaking through the screen...the expectant crowd is almost on top of you! You return the service with a top spin backhand, then a forward back-spin, the ball bounces high from your opponent's looping, defensive lob...SMASH!...a great shot opens the score...but this is only your first point! Play head to head or against the computer in this, Konami's first and best table-tennis simulation.
HYPER SPORTS
Enter the stadium of Konami's No. 1 arcade smash-hit sports simulation. From the finesse and skill of Archery and Skeet Shooting to the critical timing and brute force of weight lifting – six events to test you to your limit. Hyper Sports – continuing the challenge where 'Track and Field' left off.
only 8·95 each
Imagine Software is available from selected branches of:
WHSMITH, John Menzies, WOOLWORTH, LASKYS, Rumbelows, Greens, Spectrum Shops and all good dealers.



MAX HEADROOM
What I want to know is...
...why would anyone play anything else?
Available for the Commodore 64, Spectrum and Amstrad at a recommended retail price of £9.95.
QUICKSILVA
The most powerful games in the Universe
Quicksilva Ltd.,
Liberty House,
222 Regent Street,
London W1R 7DB.
01-439 0666
© Chrysalis Visual Programming Ltd.




## AMSTRAD SHOW DESCENDS ON MANCHESTER

By the time you read this the Amstrad Computer Show's first appearance north of Watford will be upon us. I refer, of course, to the show's debut appearance at the New Century Hall in Corporation Street, Manchester, on Saturday, March 22, and Sunday, March 23.

If the advertising publicity for the event is to be believed there should be plenty of new hardware and software products and, of course, the usual selection of special offers from the leading companies. As a taster we can reveal **Screens** will be showing off an add-on board from **Vortex** which will give the 6128 IBM compatibility; **Advanced Memory System** will be introducing their Pagemaker system; and **Cirkits** will have five new products for the CPC range.

The event should be well received in Manchester. After all the area boasts two established user clubs, the Manchester Amstrad User Club, which has already been featured in AMTIX! on our user club page, and also the Amstrad North West User Club, which will be featured providing their secretary remembers to send us information about themselves! Indeed our show spy tells us all the stands were taken within a week of the event being advertised and there is a long waiting list in the hope some of the exhibitors will drop out. Ticket sales have gone well with over 3,500 sold for the two days.

AMTIX! will be having a stand at the show and we look forward to seeing all you amsters there. Our word surgeon, Malcolm Harding, will be attending his first Amstrad show so come along and make him welcome.

The show is open from 10 am to 6 pm on the Saturday and from 10 am to 5 pm on the Sunday. Admission charges on the door are £3 for adults and £2 for children although you may be able to save money by making a last minute call on the show hotline, 061-429-7931. See you there!

## APOLOGIES

Fat Joyce was probably concerned to read an item in last month's Lettertech which contained a couple of small errors. No excuses are made even though we could have blamed the writer's bad scribble. We would like to put the record straight before some smart Alec writes to us. The letter talks about the upgrading of the RAM disk and asks if it is merely a matter of plugging in some 256K bit chips of 159ns or faster. This should have read 150ns. In the reply it is stated Amstrad originally intended to use 8K chips when the Joyce was designed but when they arrived the cost of the 16K chips had fallen substantially. This was again incorrect and the chips should have been 64K bit and 256K bit respectively.

PR tycoon, David Carlos was probably miffed to discover he had been incorrectly called the former editor of Popular Computer Weekly. Perish the thought! It should have been Home Computer Weekly, of course. Sorry David!

## RECOGNITION AT LAST

Here we are almost a quarter of the way into 1986 and at last some of the software companies have committed themselves by originating new games on the Amstrad. It's easy to overlook the fact 1985 was the Amstrad computer's first full year, the popularity of the machine gives one the impression it has been around for much longer.

As we are all aware at first the software houses tended to look at Amstrads as an afterthought but they were obliged to re-think their strategy because of the sheer number of Amsters populating the country. Activision have already gone on record as saying they only consider working on either Amstrads or Commodores and some companies are now originating new games on Amstrads. It all bodes well for the industry and long may it do so.

## ADVERTISERS' INDEX



## SOFTWARE REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE



**THE MONTHLY SOFTWARE STAR FOR YOUR US GOLD CALENDAR**

US GOLD AMTIX




**Welcome to yet another issue of AMTIX! The stairs continue to creak under the weight of postbags but that doesn't mean you have to stop writing! Keep those letters rolling in. We must make sure the OTS team don't find time to enjoy themselves! To make their task slightly more bearable please ensure you address your letters in the correct manner (see the bottom of the column for guidance) and also ensure any seriously minded technical letters or problems go to the LETTERTECH heading. This prevents the post sorters from throwing a wobbler. If you have a technical letter you can enclose it with your OTS one but make sure they are on separate sheets of paper and clearly marked.**

**There's been some internal comment about how difficult it is to write replies to your letters in OTS as a 'team' (the personal touch is much nicer). So, although the members of AMTIX! staff all have their say in the replies, we've decided to get one person at a time to handle the keyboard — a sort of guest On the Spotter each month, and we'll rotate the task! This month then, we kick off with our Glorious Publishing Exec, none other than Roger Kean, the man who's been called traitor by CRASHites and ZZAPers alike. Never mind, Rog, it's all in a day's work for an upwardly mobile young person. Over to yourself . . .**

**Thanks, whoever you are. Looking through this month's mailbag for a top notch prize-winning missive, I thought this one deserved our overly-generous software prize . . .**

## GAMES ON DISK AND/OR CASSETTE

Dear AMTIX!
I want to talk about disks (or discs depending upon how patriotic you are). Oh no! I hear you cry, not disks again. However, my question is somewhat different to those asked before.

Recently I have noticed the number of games available on disk, but not available on cassette, is growing. I understand the reasons for this of course, more memory available, faster data storage and retrieval etc, but surely there could be a smaller or slower version of such a game on cassette?

For example I have read that the forthcoming release *Back to the Future*, will be on disk only due to its sophisticated digitised graphics. Is this true and if so why can't Arnold owners have a version with standard graphics?

Amsoft are also bringing out a range of adventures which will be on disk only.

I know there are more games than I would play in a year available for the 464 but must I really buy a disk drive to play these new releases? I feel it is wrong to leave out 464 users. After all it was the 464 that started the Amstrad's rise to number one in the computer market.

Well now my one moan is over I can get on with telling you how good AMTIX! is. I usually buy four Amstrad mags every month, three of which shall remain unmentioned, and AMTIX! is by far the best. I would suggest, however, that the software reviewers put their names at the bottom of the criticisms so we can see who thinks what. Keep up the good work, as the mag goes, and keep beating the other mags out of sight.

**D Ramdenee, Essex**
PS What's a Schneider?

**Times are a'changing! As you say yourself faster storage/retrieval and more memory — so if computer games are to progress then they'll have to throw off their tapey chains. In the States cassette based games were a non-starter because there the concept of owning a disk drive was second nature. I know the drive is a rather expensive add-on for the 464 owner, but it really is worth having. I don't think you need worry though, cassette games are going to be around for quite some time yet! As I think we mentioned last month, in some parts of Europe Amstrads are sold using the Schneider trade name. Anyway, the software of your choice is on its way!**
*OTS*

## A COUPLE OF CRIMES

Dear Sirs,
I am a recent purchaser of AMTIX! and have bought CRASH since it first swooped in for the kill over a turgid and unsuspecting software market. At the very least you gave it a well-deserved kick up the posterior which had been due since the first games were released on the Speccy.

Although I have bought a few lemons in the past I believe the quality of your reviews and percentages given more truthfully reflect the worth of most current software more than certain of your sanctimonious competitors. If you are guilty of any crime at all it has been that of exposing the less-reputable producers and helping to ensure they either bucked up their ideas or became extinct.

The problem now is that of choosing which of the wealth of quality software to buy. All the good producers are worthy of support but the ever-shrinking pound will only go so far. I hope this cleaning up of the market will extend in the direction of the Amstrad range which is sorely in need of some sort of quality control. Alan Sugar may want to offer computing to the 'truck driver and his family' but I'm sure he didn't really intend to saddle them with such a lorry load of dross as currently goes under the collective title of 'Amsoft'.

If anyone looks through the early Amsoft catalogues they will see that the majority of games were conversions from the Spectrum. Unfortunately I had bought many of them already. I have also been disappointed on occasion in that the Spectrum versions have been better. In all it has been the low-res graphics games which have really showed the quality of the 464. *Sorcery* and *The Survivor* are easily up to the best Commodore can show, but how many 64 owners managed to get a set up that is so complete, ie monitor, cassette deck, large memory, and excellent basic, for so few pounds?

Finally, to the real point of my letter. Up to now the Amstrad range has been poor cousin to the Spectrum — we've had recycled games since day one, and I don't really expect many products to get first release on Amstrad. What I would like to argue against is a recycled CRASH hiding behind the AMTIX! logo.

A quick look through the first ▷





issue shows what I mean. Several reprint maps, one of a game that I've not seen out for the Amstrad — *Lords of Midnight*. Not to mention the playing tips and Terminal Man. I hope future issues will have more meat and less stodge to fill out the pages. I may seem selfish but I strongly suspect many Amstrad owners were (or still are) Spectrum owners, and probably have bought CRASH. Therefore they, like myself, will be unintentionally buying the same stuff twice. Apart from Terminal Man a lot of the maps have been published in *C&VG*, *Your Computer*, *Your Spectrum* etc, so I question the need to reprint anything but the most recent conversions. If you must recycle material then perhaps you can give readers the chance to request it. Personally, I would like to see a detailed analysis of the budget software games on sale for the Amstrad in AMTIX!

Finally, thanks for CRASH and AMTIX!, long may they reign. Keep us informed and the software producers on their toes.

**William J Fox, Matlock, Derbyshire**

**Obviously the first 'crime' is no crime! What's the point of supporting poor quality product — it does nobody any good, least of all, in the end, the software producers themselves. As to the second 'crime', the recycling of CRASH — well, a point first. Most software houses are now developing games for the Amstrad at the same time as other versions, indeed one or two are working on the Amstrad first and then converting to the Spectrum (Design Design for instance). Virgin's *Sorcery* was so different from the Spectrum version as to be a new game and *Sorcery II* was only on the Amstrad. Re-using maps from CRASH makes sense where the versions play identically, this month's *3 Weeks in Paradise* map is exclusively for AMTIX!, and *LOM* was available on the Amstrad. Letting readers say what they want in this context is impracticable because of the time lag involved. As to whether other magazines also print maps is up to them, we do what we feel is right at the time regardless. Let's hope most of you think we're right most of the time!**
*OTS*

As far as I am aware they are not enhanced versions of the same game, as is the case in *Sorcery*, so why are they charging nearly double what other manufacturers charge? A case of screwing as much money out of the gullible public as possible perhaps? I really don't know.

Lastly may I say how much I enjoy your magazine, you seem to get better with every issue. I was an avid reader of CRASH but suspected that you would be unable to keep up to the same standard; I'm happy to report that my fears were groundless. Keep up the good work, and many thanks for a superb review of the Infocom adventures. I can't wait for them to be made available in the shops. Best wishes.

**Kris Morris, Saltash, Cornwall**

**Thanks for the kind comments. The overpricing of disk products certainly seems to be unfair, but you don't seem to mention how much it costs to put a program onto disk from a master. Perhaps some software house could enlighten us all? Yes, there does seem to be a differential in disk pricing between companies, and your maths seem fair enough. Still, Firebird were fairly able to gamble on high volume sales for *Elite* and perhaps that makes the real difference?**
*OTS*

## LEAVE SPECCY ALONE

Dear AMTIX!
How my blood boiled when I read your letters page ON THE ZIT, with wallies prattling on about the superior Amstrad and sod the rest (Fairlight on Amstrad-NEVER). It isn't just that. February's edition in the column FASTER GO FASTER had someone in it moaning about Spectrum conversions. Later on OTS state Spectrum conversions have helped Amstrad. WHAT DO YOU MEAN??

Can I ask Amstrad owners to stop slagging the Speccy, (it would be easy to say the 464 has a return key the size of a ZX81 and the keyboard has as many colours as MODE 0). I own a Spectrum and a 6128. It makes me very angry to own such a marvellous machine when immature kids can do nothing better than boast and brag. The ZX81 was a home computer breakthrough and the Spectrum is a legend in colour/sound home computers. (Good ol' Clive). So fellow Amstrad owners be content with your machine, others don't concern you.

One more moan. The February edition was a mess. The TLL picture was upside down and the accolade signs had disappeared. Need I go on, no OK then). Keep up the good work!

**Kevin Hall, Norwich, Norfolk**

**Yes, we've all become very bored by all this computer rivalry business. First of all it was Spectrum owners vs Commodorian, now the Amstrad has come into it. All machines have their good and bad points why can't everyone accept that? By the way, the February issue was a special spot-the-art-department-mistakes edition, we were just wondering how many people would write in!**
*OTS*

## ADVENTURE COLUMN HELP?

Dear OTS,
Having just bought your magazine for the fourth time may I say what a marvellous job you are doing. Keep it up! Well that's enough of the backslapping. May I make a few suggestions to improve your adventure column? How about an adventure help column?

I am sure any adventurer who's stuck in *Jewels of Babylon* would agree with me it is very frustrating especially when you have just bought it and played it for a few minutes and found you have come to a dead end with no hope of getting out. Not all of us are experts in the adventure field. I am stuck in *Neverending Story* and can't free Gmork the Werewolf. So come on lads how about it. I will look forward to hearing from the readers' comments on my plea.

**Sean Brady, Eltham**

**We've received several 'help me please' adventure letters now, and most of them have been passed onto your namesake, Sean Masterson for the AMTIX! ARCANA section. This will no doubt expand over the coming months as more feedback occurs.**
*OTS*

## 6128 ANSWERED MY PRAYERS

Dear OTS,
I hate to start a letter on a sour note but I feel that I must reply to Mervyn Pugh's letter in last month's issue. His remarks about disks have left me totally amazed. I wonder for how long he's been using computers?

My experiences with them started way back with an Acorn Atom (they don't make them like that anymore!!) and then the beloved Spectrum took over. The one thing that I was itching for was an affordable disk drive, but even though prices were falling, they were still an expensive proposition. I was fed up having to wait for hours on end, well okay minutes on end, but I'm sure you know what I mean, when the same program would take seconds to load on a disk based system.

Then my prayers were answered when the 6128 was released. Since then my enthusiasm, has known no bounds. Letters can be written using the excellent Tasword and stored to disk for instant retrieval, superb games are possible (imagine trying to operate an Infocom adventure from tape, totally impossible), and no longer having to wait ages for a game to load only to be met with a Read Error. Disks are here to stay, thankfully, but I do endorse the remarks made regarding the excessive prices charged by some software manufacturers.

Your reply to that part of Mervyn's letter was not completely satisfactory. I am quite willing to pay extra for a game produced on disk, and understand that there are other things that add to the cost besides the obvious difference in price between a tape and a disk. In issue no. 3 you stated in the letter column that a disk can cost companies £2 as opposed to 30p for a cassette. Add to that £2 the cost of different packaging and everyone putting on their percentage and I can see no reason why a disk based game should cost any more than £3 - £3.50 over the price of the same tape based game.

Such is the case with many games/utilities eg *Elite* costs £3 more for the disk version. Why then do companies such as Activision and Vortex (to name but two) charge £5 and £6 more for their disk versions of *Barry McGuigan's World Championship Boxing* and *TLL*?

## HELP NEEDED ON KNIGHT LORE

Dear Sirs,
Many thanks for the *Knight Lore* map in issue No 3 (January 1986). On page 48 there is a proggy (your word — not mine!) by Andrew Lang for typing in before loading *Knight Lore*. I tried to type it in but Arnold wouldn't accept it. Could you please explain it in basic BASIC?

1: Line 30 doesn't seem to make sense: For F4 0 to 15 — what is the significance of the figure four after the F? Why is it in a different type face to the other figure fours on the page?

2: Line 40 and 50 — I don't have a quarter symbol on my computer keyboard.

3: Line 50 — POKE A0001? If I type that in Arnold simply replies 'Overflow'. However, if I put in a comma before the 1 it accepts it.

If I try to run the program the disk drive whirrs and Arnold says the disk is missing. So, I insert a disk, instruct run and Arnold says 'O not found'. Can you help please?

Please bear in mind that some of your readers are lesser mortals — we're not all computer whizz-kids! I've only been computing since I bought my 6128 in September last year, prior to that I had never even touched a computer — I was too scared! One further point — what is the proggy supposed to



do? Nothing is mentioned in the text.

Now that I've got that off my chest — many thanks for the maggy (there, you've got me at it now!) — er, I mean magazine. I've been buying all four Amstrad magazines but, as finances are creaking a bit, two have had to go. The other magazine, which reviews programs but is 'NOT an official Amstrad publication', fell from favour when it was priced 50 per cent more for the Christmas edition. It claimed to be a Bumper Christmas Edition but, search as I may, I could find no 'tidings of comfort and joy.' I presume that the 50p increase was to pay for the Mega Gift stuck to the front cover. It was the first time I have ever paid for a gift! I wouldn't have minded but the games were grotty anyway. As for Amstrad Official Magazine it just leaves me cold. So keep up the good work. And do keep the way you are and I'm sure you'll have many happy readers. Apologies for any typing errors. I do have a Tasword 6128 but as the DMP 2000 Printer is apparently unavailable in my neck of the woods I've just got to keep bashing away at my antiquated typewriter!
**John D Scott, Lowestoft, Suffolk**

**Mr Rob Candy of the tips section should be able to help you. Cast a beady eye to that section and I think that your queries should be answered. Other magazines??? No comment about 'free' gifts. As to a DMP 2000 printer, have a go at this month's Incentive competition — perhaps you can win one!**
*OTS*

## I PROGRAMMED SPY VS SPY

Dear AMTIX!
After reading CRASH and AMTIX! since issues one and zero respectively I have finally found something to write to you about (having previously found little to complain about).

Ta for your review of my *SPY vs SPY* and may I be allowed to make a couple of points. The breadcrumbs were left out due to memory problems as was the tune. You didn't point out that it is also available on disk. Actually I developed a wonder disk system (by the way, what's all this dis(k)c rubbish. If you have to do that it should be dis(k)c.

Back to the review. I suspect it's closing doors that you're having problems lining up with. If so, hold down fire and run at the door. That way you're guaranteed to be pressing fire at the right time. (If you're not careful you might end up on the trapulator though).

My mum and dad complained that the review didn't mention them for listening to 5000 assorted buckets of water sound effects till I got it about right (one attempt left me with a great striking a match sound though what use that is I don't know).

In the same OTS someone wanted you to say whether games would suit green screens; Being an impoverished programmer I can only afford one Amstrad so it had to be colour but I tried (as I always do) to do it with green in mind. I avoided using any really dark colours for backgrounds and I hope it looks okay.

Oh yes, as a Spectrum owner I feel dreadfully insulted at the Graphics' comment. What is a Commodore anyway? These are Amstrad quality graphics, infinitely better. The Commodore only allows the colour of the room plus black, white and pink in any one room whereas mine has black, white, pink, blue, red, brown, grey and the room colour. The carpets are better in mine too (well I think so anyway).
**Michael Fox, Aldridge, Walsall**

**It's nice to see a programmer enjoying a review of his game, it's not always the case. More than once I've seen Sean sweating away, gearing himself up for yet another reply to a complaint (no names mentioned). As for a special colour/green rating, this would mean someone having to load every reviewed game at some point to double check. Time is money so consequently such a rating could well mean an increased cover price, and indications are that most gamers have got colour screens — perhaps the Questionnaire in this issue will reveal a bit more.**
*OTS*

## MOTHER IS CONFUSED

Dear AMTIX!
After purchasing AMTIX! and arriving back home I sat down in the kitchen and began to read it. While I was reading it my mum decided to make the dinner, and she suddenly said, 'Do you want a moped', she said. 'Well you said you would like one to use with your computer'. And then it dawned on me she meant modem!!!
Could you please teach my mum (her name is Esther) the difference. Thanks
**Robert Shepherd, Sutton-On-Sea, Lincs**

**Think of it this way, Robert, I'm sure if your dear mum asked you something about the finer ingredients of a complicated French dish you wouldn't be able to get them half right. Give her a chance . . . at least she's learning.**
*OTS*

## MISSING ACCOLADES

Dear AMTIX!
Not long ago I was at the second Amstrad show. I thought it was much better than the first affair which was cramped up in a tiny space. The Newsfield stand was fairly good. I am glad you were selling the new edition of AMTIX! at the show because I don't think I could have waited until Thursday the 16th. There was one thing wrong with AMTIX! though. What happened to all the AMTIX! ACCOLADE signs?

The only one in the whole magazine was for *Nightshade*, the others had a blank white space.

I noticed in your February edition a letter from a Shatquat Rasul, who said trying to overtake another car on *3D Grand Prix* was like trying to negotiate a way past a brick wall. I suggest he practises a bit, because it isn't that difficult. It didn't take me very long until I could get on to the next track. In fact I find it so easy that I don't play it anymore.

I wish people would stop grumbling at Mr Sugar. You just have to look at what he has done for home computing and you can find many more things to congratulate him for than grumble at him.

All I have left to say now is stop saying that *Lord of the Rings* hasn't been released on the Amstrad. It's been around for yonks. How do I know? I've seen it in loads of shops! Even Amstrad Action say it hasn't been released!
**David Smithers, Harrow, Middlesex**
**PS** Could you find out how much Firebird's *Runestone* is, because I've read a review of the Spectrum version in CRASH and it looks great.

**Yes, the show was quite good. I think Mr Shatquat has been moaned at enough now, don't you? The Accolade logos were missing because there was an error made at our colour repro house. They don't often do things like that, but there you go, occasionally it happens — sorry! *Lord of the Rings* is out now, and probably was when you read us saying it wasn't, but don't forget that statement was made some three weeks before the mag actually got out on sale. By the way, I've been told that *Runestone* retails at £7.95.**
*OTS*



# ON-THE-SPOT

## RECORD BREAKERS?

Dear AMTIX!
Ah! T'was the night before New Year's Eve and not a soul stirred. I tell a lie — four souls did stir. These four jolly souls being myself, my brother, and two friends. The event was *Yie Ar Kung-Fu* by Imagine. Well! What more can I say? This feat started at 5.24 pm exactly and continued until bedtime (12.00 pm).

During this period, a score of mega-proportions was amassed. The score I refer to was one of 8,528,820. I jest ye not! At bedtime, the elders came and switched off the Amstrad. We had reached level 463 with more than 60 lives left! Come on Imagine — who said it becomes harder as you progress?

I also have a few questions. When the hell is *Impossible Mission* coming out? Will Ocean ever release *Rambo* for the Ammie? Are Infocom converting their adventures to tape? Great magazine! Keep it up!

**Nick Stokes (and the fab three!): Richard Stokes, Oliver Lambert, Kim Lambert, Harrogate, N Yorks**

**Jolly good show, what! Perhaps you'd like to submit your score to the highscore tables. When is *Impossible Mission* coming out? 'Uh, I dunno,' says Robin Candy. Quite soon I should think, just keep scanning the news pages. *Rambo*? Well, Ocean say that it's out now, but perhaps you could explain why their release date announcers have wooden noses ten feet long? As for Infocom adventures on tape, not very likely, I'm afraid. The disk accessing goes on every few seconds and you would have to wait years for the same thing in an entire game on cassette. Also, the way they're written for disk use makes them nigh on impossible to re-write for cassette use.**
*OTS*

## SERIOUS SOFTWARE LISTINGS?

Dear Sir,
After much indecision I bought AMTIX! No 3 today. I bought No 2 last month too! In fact your review of Tasword 6128 persuaded me to buy that program and I am using it to write this letter now. It is being printed on a DMP 2000 printer which arrived on Wednesday. Very nice!

I just wanted you to know that you have another reader who is mainly interested in the AM-TECH section rather than the games and garish posters department. Hence my hesitation about buying the magazine. I am loath to part with my hard earned £1 for 13 pages out of 122. I have done so for two months but I also buy another magazine first because it contains useful programs and more details about the machine. However the reviews in that magazine are so biased towards Amstrad and the trumpet blowing so offputting that I really appreciate your reviews.

How about producing a magazine with technical reviews and programming aids and listings of serious software as in Acorn User or Beebug? There seems to be nothing like those two magazines for the Amstrad.

It would also be helpful to have a series of articles on Dr Logo. Amstrad inform me they intend to produce a manual for the C/PM version but do not know when! The list of instructions in the User Guide is enough to make it clear that it is a very powerful language but how ever do you use it? You also have a contributor who understands C/PM. Could we have articles on using all that wonderful software on the systems disk? Again the HELP file is of some use but hardly comprehensive.

Your software service is an excellent one. If I had any money left after buying the computer I would make use of it. If Ludlow is anything like Hereford (and my views of it from the train suggests it is!) then no shop of any type, let alone computer shops, stocks a full range of anything. So mail order is a must.

I hope my comments are helpful and I hope too that you get other letters like mine which encourage you to devote a whole magazine to people like us. Then I shall be spared my indecision every month!

**Graham Bennett, Hereford**

**Publishing any magazine is an extraordinarily expensive business, something not often recognised by readers (well why should you?), so it's extremely important to have an 'outlook' on what to publish. In our case, following on from the success of CRASH and then ZZAP! 64, games are obviously our metier, while not forgetting the technical aspects entirely. When AMTIX! was launched there already existed two titles primarily concerned with the more serious side of the computer and it seemed pointless to triplicate that effort. However, once again, I hope this month's Questionnaire will help clarify some of the very points you have made.**
*OTS*

## CREATING A DISK MARKET IS UNFAIR

Dear OTS,
Re your February letter of the month. A recent visit to WH Smith in Broadmead, Bristol, shows a growing number of Amstrad titles are being stocked ONLY on disk, even though they are all available on cassette. This is not true of the Commodore software range. And now, you say, Amsoft is dedicated to ever more software being released on disk only 'in answer to a demand from the market place'.

With respect, what WH Smith and Amsoft are doing is creating the demand for disks, by selling very few tapes. It's probably for the same reason that Mirrorsoft sell disks for the Amstrad at £2 more than the Commodore, and WH Smith sells, regularly, software for the Amstrad well above even the RRP. The latest example, £24.95 for *GAC* from Incentive, when everybody, and his Mother, sells it for £22.95 including postage.

And the underlying reason that binds all of these people together? Easy, Amsoft have shown everybody that they like screwing the public. *Charge the highest prices for any Amstrad software.* Put £2 on the price of cassettes, and disks who cares? Certainly not your magazine.

For your information, a recent survey showed that an increasingly large percentage of the 'computer public' are unemployed. Which is probably true, because I'm one of the unemployed. A computer serves many masters. Fun, education, some kind of chance in the future.

I have a wife and, two children, I gave up drinking, and smoking totally, and it's taken me 18 months to pay for the computer. By the way, sorry if this makes any of you people ill, but I have a green screen version, yes! They do exist! Not that any of your software reviews ever acknowledges that! (With the exception of *Battle of Britain*. I expect, by now, you've sacked that reviewer).

Anyway, after all the scrimping, and saving, and monthly payments, what am I left with? The feeling that having a green screen monitor is the computer equivalent of being a child molester, and the certain knowledge that, once again, Amstrad owners are going to be treated like dirt, in answer to a 'demand from the market place'.

Is this famous market place the same one that demanded the 664 be scrapped? And now you people seem to kissing Amsoft's backside again. Just where the hell do you think me, and thousands like me, can get one £150 for a disk drive? I've come to expect Amstrad to treat us all as nothing, but for God's sake, could you stop encouraging them! Yours Truly

**PJ Long, Bedminster, Bristol**

**Mr Long, you're getting a bit hysterical! For a start off, computing and its peripherals is a commercial business like any other, and manufacturers can't be expected to act any differently from anyone else, just because statistics indicate that a large minority of their customers are unemployed. For a start there are computer retailers other than WH Smith, there must be many other shops in Bristol so why not shop around? From what you are saying it sounds like cassette software production has completely ground to a halt. Take a look through the pages in this magazine and see how many new cassette games there are this month.**

**No one here is 'helping' Amstrad to do anything, what they do is their proper business, ours is to comment on it, which is all we have done.**
*OTS*

## MORE STRATEGY AND SERIOUS STUFF

Dear Messrs Kean and Harding,
As a newcomer to both personal computers and Amstrads may I say how useful I find your magazine. Reviews are personal things so please ensure that you give us plenty of facts. While I agree that *Spitfire 40* is an excellent program, pilots have neither to 'unstick their tails' on off, nor to 'flare' on landing, essential elements for a tail wheel aircraft.

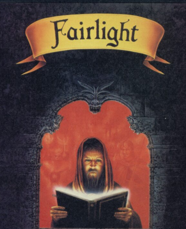
I still have not found a 'real' flight simulation; I look forward to the day we have to set differential braking in order to taxi. You stress that you want to cover the whole range of programs; if so, can I put in a vote for a little more 'serious' and strategy. Arcade and adventure reviews appear to get a major slice of the available space. Incidentally, the one player version to *The War Game* (Issue 4, p 88) is on the other side of the tape — but it is hardly worth the effort.

**C Russell, Surbiton, Surrey**

**The big problem with a 'real' flight simulator would be that most budding pilots wouldn't even be able to get off the ground, so they're simplified so all us wallies can fly about without too much hassle. As for 'serious' and strategy stuff: the bulk of Amstrad games are arcade and adventure games, therefore it's only natural that they get the lion's share of the pages.**
*OTS*

**That's it for another issue. If you have any points to make, any grievances to air, any banner to wave, on any subject of a non-technical manner then write to the OTS team. The address is ON THE SPOT, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.**

# CHRONICLES OF THE LAND OF FAIRLIGHT
## 1. A PRELUDE: THE LIGHT REVEALED




## BY BO JANGEBORG
(author of 'The Artist')

**"Maybe *the* game of the year!"**
Your Spectrum, November 1985

**". . . one of the most sophisticated games the Spectrum has ever seen."**
**". . . one of the ten best programs ever made for the Spectrum."**
Popular Computing Weekly, October 1985.

**". . . the best arcade adventure of the year."**
Your Spectrum, November 1985




12/13 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LH Tel: 01-240 1422/7877 Telex: 892379

# TAU-CETI

**CRL, £9.95 cass**




In the year 2050 man expanded his empire from Earth's solar system. Four nearby G stars, Alpha Centauri, Tau Ceti, Van Maanen's Star and Beta Hydri were colonised by the adventurous explorers. Civilisations were built up on the new found homes and all seemed well. On Tau Ceti thirty cities were constructed and the Cetans prospered. Then disaster struck exactly one hundred years later as an outbreak of Encke's syndrome spread throughout the planet. The Cetans who were not afflicted with the disease were evacuated to Earth, Tau Ceti was sealed off and the remaining Cetans left behind to die!

Two years later a vaccine was discovered for Encke's syndrome. Within a matter of weeks the colonies on the planets were resumed except for Tau Ceti. A meteor had smashed into the planet and all contact had been lost with the robot forces of the thirty cities. A few expeditions were sent to investigate but only one managed to report back to Earth before radio contact was lost.

It transpired that the meteor, which had crashed into the planet, had corrupted the circuits of the robot defence mechanisms. This resulted in the robots controlling themselves, destroying anything that ventured onto THEIR planet. The robots had been so carefully built that they could stave off an attack of epic proportions. Earth's Gal-Corp decided that a small, one man, snub nose fighter might be able to dodge the lasers of the robot defence craft and succeed in shutting the capital city of Centralis down, the location of the robots' central reactor.

Guess who volunteered for the mission?

Your survival and the success of the mission depends entirely on your ability to control the planet skimmer. This version is specially adapted with many extras all of which must be mastered if you are to triumph. At your disposal are heat seeking missiles, starlight flares, infra red night sights, anti missile missiles, a ruby single mounted laser and a JCN computer (fully debugged).

The screen is split into three main sections: the action window, the short range scanner and the text window. It is in the action window that most of the game is played. Here the map of the planet is displayed, plus the notepad and once the skimmer has been launched it shows the front, left, right or back view from your skimmer depending on your selection. The scanner shows all that is in the local vjcinity and the objects' positions relevant to your craft. The text window only operates when you are docked with a building. When it is operative you can communicate directly with the computer via the key-









board. It is during this mode that the map of Tau Ceti can be called up and on the notepad, you can write useful things here such as the location of a particular object etc. Just to the right of the text window is a smaller window which displays information on speed, height, laser temperature, fuel and shields. Just above this are details on what armament you have left.

Your actual mission is to shut down the central reactor of the planet. In order to accomplish this a number of damping rods have to be located and inserted into the reactor. Matters are made worse because the rods have been split into bits and must be rebuilt before insertion.

On launching for the first time you are presented with a three-dimensional view of what lies in front of you, in shaded graphics. The landscape is littered with various buildings which served specific purposes in the colonisation of Tau Ceti. These consist of jump pads, reactors, supply centres, fortresses, domes and spheres. Most of these buildings can be docked with by careful manoeuvres. Inside you are automatically transferred into the text mode where you can replenish your ship's stocks of weaponry and fuel. Also contained within some supply centres are extra weapons and other goodies such as cooling rods to help you with your mission. The ruby laser is designed to pierce the strong armour of the robots subsequently it is powerful enough to destroy many of the buildings on Tau Ceti. This may appeal to some people's sadistic nature but your mission is to recapture Tau Ceti not destroy it!

Tau Ceti's position in the solar system means that it has a very short day. So short in fact that it is the equivalent of one Earth hour. To compensate for this the skimmer is equipped with night sights which provide an infra red interpretation of what lies ahead.

There are three types of Hunter robots which will seek and attempt to destroy you on detection. These vary in capabilities some are faster than others while others are more cunning. It will take both and experienced pilot and an expert strategist to destroy the robots. If you clear one city of robots then it is possible to use the jump pads to get to other cities, more robots and more adventures.

## CRITICISM

**1** **This is a great game to come from the CRL stable. The graphics are excellent but I feel that colour could have been used a bit better.** *Tau Ceti* **is not very easy to get into so it takes quite a few games but there is so much to it that it is worth while in the end. The whole game is totally addictive and worth while. I just hope that CRL can keep this sort of standard up.**

**2** The first time I ever played this the game came across to me as being slightly boring but after playing it for a short while I soon discovered that there is so much to it. The graphics are really well done with plenty of attention paid to detail, right down to the shadows on the buildings which move as the day goes by. The only minor quibble is that the colour could have been slightly improved. Definitely one to get if you want an excellent and absorbing game

**3** Tau Ceti *is a massive game with brilliant presentation and amazing graphics. After the launch sequence, I found myself in a very busy city with a heavily armoured ship on my tail. On launching a missile I saw a fast moving, smooth and filled in missile come out of my back end (my ship's that is). The graphics throughout the whole game are very detailed and move smoothly about the play area.* Tau Ceti *was very easy to get into and the instructions really set the scene for a mega-game. The sound is very effective and complements the movement of the ship perfectly. One very neat feature is the map with which you can expand, reduce and even find out all about the city you're going to — just like* Elite. *Pete 'icon-man' Cooke has again come up with a very well polished game with a lot more to it than in his older games.*

**Presentation 85%**
Great packaging and detailed instructions.

**Graphics 89%**
Smooth, slick and detailed.

**Sound 69%**
Very good effects but no tunes.

**Playability 81%**
Takes a while to get the hang of piloting the skimmer.

**Addictive qualities 96%**
Once the controls have been mastered it is hard to put the game away.

**Value for money 88%**
Not cheap but worth it.

**Overall 93%**
Not quite the 'greatest' game ever! but nevertheless it is brilliant.

# DEATHSVILLE

**Bubble Bus, £8.95 cass**




## CRITICISM

**1** DEATHSVILLE seems to be another boring game with little to it. Its one saving grace are the graphics which are colourful and detailed but they tend to flicker a bit, especially the main character. The sound is really poor for an Amstrad, a few tunes here and there would have been appreciated. I found DEATHSVILLE fun to play for a while but it became a bit too repetitive for my liking. If you like arcade adventures then you might find it has some appeal on the exploring, finding and solving level.

**2** After playing *Deathsville* you get the idea that someone has been playing too much of the terrific Wally games as it looks and plays just like it. It's another arcade/adventure game of which a lot are on the market today. Bubble Bus have so far made some good games, ie *Wizards Lair*, but *Deathsville* is not a perfect game its graphics are not up to scratch and the characters are not all that recognisable. The colour is about the best thing of the game as it's splashed out all over the place and mixes together well. So, not one of the best games around.

**3** DEATHSVILLE is a typical problem solving game in the same vein as Wally games. The graphics are as colourful but not quite as good as the Wally games, however. The sound is poor, mainly limited to sound effects, and although it contains a tune at the start and finish, that's not up to standard either. Controlling Sam is not always easy, in fact picking objects up is a bit awkward. Overall the game is an average Arcade Adventure that pales in comparison to the likes of THREE WEEKS IN PARADISE.

Poor old Sammy Solver has got himself into trouble. It all began about two weeks ago when he was walking down the high street, with his Fine Fare carrier bag, when who should he bump into but nice Mr Death himself, no less. There he was in the flesh (in the metaphorical sense) looking for an innocent bystander to take part in Bubble Bus' latest game. Now Sammy Solver, despite his name, is a pretty ordinary guy with absolutely nothing special about him, the perfect person for Mr Death's game.

Despite killing people every day Mr Death is a pretty good guy and he knows that you can't go around stealing people for computer games just for the sake of it. So up he goes to innocent Sam and tells him he's won one of those competitions that he never entered, you know the sort where billions of pamphlets pop through your letter box informing you that you may have already won a ceramic toilet but the truth is you haven't really (it's just an excuse to sell you bleach), and the prize is a trip to Sinner City, the one and only Deathsville. For those of our readers who don't know, this is not the sort of place you would want to visit. So Sammy boarded the one way bus to Deathsville and his fun packed holiday.

It didn't take long to see all the sites such the heads on spikes and the sinners in a pit. Unluckily for him the kind Mr Death had gone off on Business leaving only a note behind. The gist of the note was that he was now in a computer game and it was up to him to get back out. So there you have it, you've got to get poor Sammy out of Deathsville, preferably alive.

The game is played a bit like *Pyjamarama* in that you have to wonder around the screens picking up and dropping objects in a bid to complete the game. At the top of the screen appears a little window with your character and a hand next to a door. Believe it or not this is your life gauge. When you touch a harmful object the hand slowly moves towards you. Once it has reached him it drags Sammy off to Death's door.

As mentioned Deathsville is not a good place to spend your hols. The countryside is littered with lots of nasties that attempt to hinder your quest. These nasties include severed heads, fires and generally unspeakable things. Scoring is based on a percentage system, marks are given according to how well you play the game. Just like the Wally games the map of *Deathsville* is weird and takes a while to get used to. Poor Sammy he does have such a lot of problems but you should be able to solve them for him.

**Presentation 68%**
Good instructions but average packaging.

**Graphics 82%**
Well defined graphics but your character tends to flicker.

**Sound 46%**
Below average sound that lets the presentation of the game down

**Playability 71%**
Easy to get into and enjoy.

**Addictive qualities 67%**
Many puzzles to keep you at it for many an hour.

**Value for money 61%**
The average price for an Amstrad game but nevertheless a bit expensive compared to the game's quality.

**Overall 70%**
A sub-standard 'Wally' style game but if you like the sort it should prove enjoyable.


QUESTPROBE
FEATURING
THE HUMAN TORCH AND THE THING
by SCOTT ADAMS
with art by
RON WILSON AND
JOE SINNOTT
Can you control the awesome powers of two Marvel Super Heroes at the same time, and rescue Alicia Masters from the grip of the evil Dr. Doom? In this the third of the highly acclaimed Questprobe series, written by Scott Adams, the undisputed master of the art of adventure writing, you have to control both The Thing and The Human Torch in their mission, set by the Chief Examiner, to rescue Alicia Masters from the evil terror of Dr. Doom.
All American
ADVENTURES
CBM 64 DISK £14.95 CASS. £9.95
AMSTRAD DISK £14.95 CASS. £9.95
SPECTRUM 48K CASS. £9.95
ATARI DISK ONLY £14.95
BBC/ELECTRON (TEXT ONLY) CASS. ONLY £7.95

# THREE WEEKS IN PARADISE

**Mikro-Gen, £9.95 cass**




The Wally family, Wally, Wilma and Herbert, have gone on holiday, but they chose to go on a pedalo and subsequently have got lost. Stranded on a desert island Herbert and Wilma decided to go for a little stroll around to see if they could find any inhabitants, who could help them. Unfortunately both Wilma and Herbert did find some natives but not the sort that you would stop and ask the way. The Can Nibbles soon had Wilma and Herbert trussed up. Wilma was hung upside down from a tree while tender young Herbert was gently simmering in the pot, just in time for supper.

When Wally got to hear of this he leapt into his holiday loin cloth and set out on another adventure. So the scene is set for the latest in a long line of Wally games. Naturally you control Wally and it is up to you to rescue Wilma and Herbert and then escape from the desert island.

Of course the natives aren't going to let you just steal their dinner so they've set lots of nasty traps for you such as quicksand. As in the previous Wally games there are numerous problems to be solved all of which can be overcome by carrying certain combinations of objects. By taking objects (they lie on the floor and in other places around the island) to certain places you can create other objects. All the problems have logical solutions which require some agonising. Should you manage to solve a problem then you are normally provided with an object that helps solve the next puzzle. The scoring system is also based on how near or far away you are from finishing the game, solving a particularly hard problem boosts your percentage score somewhat.

Wally can only carry two objects at any given time, this means that a lot of the game is spent retrieving objects from other locations. Unlike the previous Wally games you have the option as to whether you wish to pick up or drop an object. When you do pick up an object it appears in a little window just below the main playing area. A description accompanies the object, very useful if you don't know what it is, and tells you what state an object is in. For example the first time you pick up the axe the screen says it is blunt, so you must now find out how to sharpen it.

Even though the Can Nibbles intend to eat both Wilma and Herbert they won't do so until they are sure they there is no danger from interfering Wallies. Some of the tribe patrol the island and kill on contact but they are not the only dangers our ardent Wally has to face. Some screens feature beasts unknown to Wallies but most of these can be passed by safely if you are carrying the correct object. You have four lives to dispose at will but use them wisely






## CRITICISM

**This is a tropical continuation of the Wally games. When *Herbert's Dummy Run* was originally released I thought that the formula may be getting a big long in the tooth but this latest game has proved me wrong. It follows the rough guide lines of the previous Wally games but this time you can opt to pick up an object. *Three Weeks in Paradise* features excellent graphics coupled with some catchy tunes. As with the previous Wally games it is fun to play but it proved to be a bit more addictive than the others. Overall a marvellous game, well worth the money.**

VE GOT A LOVE

**2** I haven't played such a jolly game in ages, *Three Weeks in Paradise* is very colourful and has a lovely little ditty at the beginning which sets the scene for a long trek throughout the jungle. The jungle itself contains lots of jungley things, like lions, cannibals, and even the odd rock car — all are well detailed, again with lots of colour. I loved the way that all the clues popped up at the bottom of the screen and the way the impression of 3D was given by passing behind some objects and in front of others. Like all the Wally games you find yourself attached to it like glue, all because of the very lovable Wally family and the way they trot around. One warning though — if you've got a weak stomach then you may find it off putting, for instance Wilma being hung from the trees and Herbert stuck in the cooking pot. But seriously I think everyone that loves the arcade adventure will love Mikro-Gen's latest release into what must be by now a flooded market.

**3** *Great graphics, great puzzles, great tune, and a really great game. If you're one of those weirdos who are totally against all of the Wally series, then of course, you won't like it, but otherwise, go out and get it now especially if you want to spend the rest of your life trying to solve out some really HEAVY problems. It's very reminiscent, in style to the rest of the Wally series but the problems and graphics are very different. Well worth spending a good few hours on, even if you haven't got a clue what to do!*

**Presentation 82%**
No real options but good instructions and packaging.

**Graphics 94%**
Big, colourful and detailed, excellent.

**Sound 79%**
Quite tuneful but could have been better.

**Playability 89%**
Easy to get into but . . .

**Addictive qualities 93%**
. . . will take you a while to solve.

**Value for money 90%**
Expensive but worth it.

**Overall 91%**
If your a Wally freak then get it.



# RASPUTIN

**FIREBIRD, £7.95 cass**



## CRITICISM

**1** RASPUTIN is a very unusual game in that you have to play on several levels. The game features oodles of devious problems in it but I found it was too slow, which made it a bit frustrating to play. The game itself is quite hard to get into but if you survive the initial frustration then it proves to be reasonably addictive. The graphics are quite good but I thought that colour could have been used a bit better. An interesting game but its speed hampers it somewhat.

**2** *Rasputin* seems to be another case for the 'great graphics, shame about the game' list. The graphics are of the highest quality, for sure, but I don't play games for graphics, I play games for fun! Firebird really could have made something of their HOT range, but it seems that they've failed. It gets incredibly tedious at times, and I certainly wouldn't fork out the necessary cash for what you get. Not one of Firebird's best releases, though I might have been tempted to give it a better review if it had been £2.50, as they used to price their games.

**3** When I first loaded RASPUTIN into my Amstrad I was very impressed with the graphics but then things started trying to move. The game is just too slow. While the graphics are good and the sound is adequate I found the game frustrating and difficult to play. However, it's very original and may appeal to many of you but don't let looks deceive. For £7.95 it represents reasonable value for money but I would rather save my pennies and buy a game that is a bit less frustrating.

The evil spirit of Rasputin has risen again! This time Earth itself is not at threat but the whole of creation. A rush meeting held between delegates of various planets surmised that a lone Kosmos Crusader would have to make the trip to Rasputin's home planet and neutralise the Jewel of the Seven planets, the source of Rasputin's power. The entire universe depends on your success.

Unfortunately for you the evil priest, who summoned the spirit of Rasputin, protected the Jewel with eight deadly spells, each of which must be broken if the mission is to be successful. In order to break the spells you must venture into Rasputin's domain and face the wrath of the evil spirit. To help you in your quest your crusader has been equipped with a magic sword and shield, great power has been bestowed in these items but their energy level must be replenished after usage. To do this stones with a special mark must be located and sat upon. If you manage to absorb the power of all the stones in a particular dimension then an evil creature will appear, this must be destroyed. Once it has been destroyed a stone inscribed with magic runes will appear, these can be collected.

Scattered around Rasputin's lair are the eight boxes that contain the spells that protect the evil spirit. To break a spell just step into a box. All of these boxes are carefully guarded by creatures and the only way to get at them is to use the Eyes of Heaven spell, this hides you from Rasputin's view but only when the colour of the background is the same colour as the spell. You cannot approach these boxes without the spell (attempting to do so will bring about your certain death).

Naturally Rasputin has not left himself unguarded, patrolling his domain are various nasties, creatures summoned from the fifth astral plain. If these touch you then your life force is slowly drained away and when this reaches zero the game ends, your soul is lost forever in eternity.

When the game starts you are presented with a three dimensional view of the screen you are in. You can then manoeuvre amongst moving blocks and baddies, going behind objects results in you disappearing from sight. Just below the main playing area several indicators detail the status of your character. These include life force indicator, shield and sword status and finally spell harmony indicators. There is no scoring system other than a percentage rating that appears at the end of the game. Your only aim is to dispose of Rasputin and his evil hordes — until then you are lost in the time vortex.

**Presentation 84%**
Excellent instructions and packaging, no options though.

**Graphics 82%**
Detailed graphics but the animation is poor.

**Sound 68%**
Mainly spot FX.

**Playability 65%**
Initially very frustrating.

**Addictive qualities 72%**
If you can survive the initial hang ups it proves quite addictive.

**Value for money 75%**
Quite a high price for a frustrating game.

**Overall 72%**
Looks good but plays a little on the slow side.

# WRECKLESS ROGER

Blaby, £1.99 cass

Graphics are not Wreckless Woger's strongest point, but the action's lively enough.

Roger (Woger to his friends) the Weckless One has got himself into a spot of bother. While exploring the local planet for precious Uranium rods, needed to keep the nuclear reactor of his ship going, he stumbled across some ancient tribes of aliens (the vicious brand always found in computer games). Naturally these aliens hadn't eaten since the last computer game scenario that featured them, and that must have been for at least at week, with their appetites whetted they started to pursue poor little Woger around the planet. Being a clever sort of chappie (he had attended Hero college for a year) he soon lost his pursuers. Equally devious, the various nasties (rated 9 on the nastiness scale, deemed suitably nasty for computer games) figured that Woger would head towards his ship, which they promptly dismantled and hid around their planet (nasty, huh?).

Now it takes quite a lot to get our Woger angry and dismantling his ship is a bit of a personal insult (would you let nasty little, pointed, greenish aliens fiddle about with your ship?), so he decides to refrain from being the main course of the day and wreak his revenge — but there is a slight problem, he doesn't know where his ship is. It's obvious that he has got to find it and rebuild it, after that he can wreak as much as he wishes.

Equipped with multi-plasma laser (as approved by the hero's guild) Roger must fly around the planet killing aliens in his search for his errant ship. Engaging his body shield (standard hero equipment), Woger enters the alien domain. There are numerous rooms to be searched but you can only move to another room once the one you are in has been cleared of nasties, inside some of the rooms there are parts of the spaceship to be collected. Once a room has been cleared then the exits materialise in front of you as if by magic.

As mentioned Woger is equipped with a body shield which serves to protect his personage, unfortunately this has a rather limited power supply and when it runs out poor old Woger loses a life. When the game starts you are granted three lives with which you must escape from the planet. Destroying the aliens earns you points which we all know make high scores. The game itself plays a bit like the old Spectrum hit *Jetpac* in that you thrust around the screen destroying aliens. The rooms themselves are similar but contain different aliens some of which are a bit more partial to Woger flesh than others.

## CRITICISM

**1** Okay, so WRECKLESS ROGER isn't exactly a mega-game, but it is good fun to play, for a while. For the price it represents reasonable value especially if you are after a cheap, challenging shoot em up. The graphics are colourful and are quite jolly but I feel they could have been improved upon by quite a lot. The game is immediately playable but there is too little variation in it to make it totally addictive. Well worth £1.99 of any games player's money

**2** For those of you who have seen *Jetpac* on other computers this is a direct derivative of it. It's a very simple game to play and consequently only takes a short while to master. The graphics are reasonable but could have been better defined. As far as shoot em ups go it's a nice game, easy to get into and fun to play. If you've got £1.99 to spare then this is worth getting.

**3** While being initially playable the game lacks somewhat in the addictive qualities, in fact it becomes very repetitive within a short while. WRECKLESS ROGER is hardly a graphical marvel but colour has been used quite well. I would not be in a hurry to rush out and buy this game by it is undeniably good value for the money.

**Presentation 56%**
Brief instructions and poor packaging make this game look a bit tacky.

**Graphics 54%**
Colourful characters but generally poor in quality.

**Sound 45%**
The usual wheeps and beeps, used quite well, but no more than average.

**Playability 78%**
Very easy to get into and generally fun to play.

**Addictive qualities 60%**
Boredom sets in because gameplay is a bit repetitive.

**Value for money 80%**
Low price for a reasonable game.

**Overall 69%**
A fun game at a the price.



Clearing the spaceways of hi-jackers around Alpha Centauri in your Skimmer Mk1, equipped with the latest in laser technology.

Budgie, £2.50 cass

# ALKAHERA

Important trade routes are being blocked by space pirates, who are hi-jacking and destroying ships at will. These routes provide the solar system with its only source of food while the galactic war continues. All of Earth's space fleet is engaged in battle around Alpha Centauri so it is up to you to clear the routes in the prototype fighter Skimmer Mk1. This ship has been equipped with the latest in laser technology and scanning equipment. Having just graduated from The Academy, Earth's computers have deemed you most suitable for the mission.

Your first task in your newly acquired job is to clear the first route, and the easiest, that you come to. Success here will result in you being deployed in other sectors that need to be ridded of the marauding aliens. There are numerous sectors to be cleared and as you progress they get harder and harder to clear. Your ship has been kitted out with pulsertronic laser sights, when an alien appears in the centre of them thumbing the trigger blasts it away.

Below the main screen are the various instrument telltales. These include the scanner (it shows the whereabouts of the attacking craft by changing colour), shields (front and rear), how many hyperblasts are left (when activated these act like smart bombs in defender, ie they destroy most of the alien ships), laser temperature, ship condition, score (points are earned for each alien destroyed) and laser mode. The ship condition indicator goes through three distinct phases: green - everything okay; yellow - some battle damage and red - shows that the ship is in pretty bad condition.

As your mission is of vital importance, the flight skimmer has been fitted with three escape pods. These are to be used when the ship's condition goes to red or the reactor powering the ship overheats. Once launched the escape pod takes you back to base where you are equipped with a new ship. As a bonus you receive an extra ship for every section of the galaxy cleared. If you are in a tight spot then it is advisable to use a hyperblast. As mentioned these are deadly to most of the aliens but you are only given three of them so they have to be reserved for special occasions.

**Presentation 60%**
Brief instructions and no options but for such a low price it is quite good.

**Graphics 69%**
Initially impressive but the animation is poor.

**Sound 45%**
Just Spot FX.

**Playability 80%**
Being a Shoot em up it is very easy to get into.

**Addictive qualities 60%**
Might have long term appeal to some but generally no depth to the game.

**Value for money 73%**
Cheap but a reasonable game.

**Overall 67%**
A simple Shoot em up but the graphics and sound let it down.

## CRITICISM

1

I found this game quite enjoyable though simple to play. It's fairly difficult to complete a mission because of all the aliens that are continually attacking you. A major drawback to the game is its graphics which, at first, look good but the animation is very jerky. Reminiscent of the old Trekkie games it is quite a good development but I suspect there is too little in it to make it worth while playing for long. Overall it is quite a good game for the price.

2

Another fast shoot em up game hits the market for space action lovers. If you enjoy blowing up everything in sight then this is the game for you. It boasts excellent graphics which are clear, detailed and use a wide range of colours. *Alkahera* should keep you hooked for a long time and at a reasonable price as well, so go and get it!

3

Now, I think that shoot em ups are getting a bit old hat, unless there's some ingenious new feature incorporated in it, and there aren't any of these in ALKAHERA. Really, it's just a pretty run of the mill, standard, and eventually tedious game. Graphics are quite good, but the ship's sights are too hard to control accurately. For the price asked, some may feel it represents good value, but I don't really think that it would keep me happy for more than a couple of hours.

# ASTRO PLUMBER

Blue Ribbon,
£2.50 cass

Repairing the Moon's leaky plumbing in ASTRO PLUMBER,' hardly adds up to a 'Super Pipeline II' in anybody's book.

## CRITICISM

**1** Yet another boring Blue Ribbon game, how do they manage to keep up such a track record of bad games? The graphics are very poor and the animation of the main character is dreadful. On playing, the game is quite fun but only for a short while, I found myself loathing it after about half an hour. Some games this month have very good sound but ASTRO PLUMBER makes no use whatsoever of the Amstrad's sound capabilities. In fact sound is limited to the odd beep and whoop. I wouldn't want to wish this game on anybody so leave it alone!

**2** Oh dear! Blue Ribbon haven't exactly got the greatest of reputations among software houses, and it is games like this one that give them that sort of record. While good fun for a short while, I became increasingly bored with it after only a few minutes. The graphics can hardly be called superlative, and the animation is nothing short of terrible. It's easy to get into and soon presents little challenge to the player. if this isn't bad enough, there is a glaring bug on the first screen which lets you jetpack through all the platforms. Don't buy this unless you wish to throw your money away.

**3** This is the sort of game you play for five minutes and then never touch ever again, it is DREADFUL. Its only redeeming feature is that it is reasonably playable, though I doubt that I would play it for long. The graphics are poor by today's standards but the use of colour is adequate. Overall this is a poor offering, but there is a chance it might appeal to trainee gamesters (unlikely but possible).

Deployed in the caverns beneath the Moon's surface, you have to repair the leaking pipes that supply scientific expeditions on the Moon. Equipped with an intergalactic plasma leak-repairing laser and a jetpack, you must explore the caves zapping at the pipes to repair them.

Unfortunately for our ardent hero the caverns happen to be inhabited by, what appear to be, flying bats. Even worse, these are the type of flying bats (in later caverns the bats change to other fell beasts) that live in leaking caverns and have so far proved to be indestructible and more than a touch deadly to repair workers. To compensate for this slight setback the engineer has been equipped with a jetpack (you know, the sort that is very useful for flying over indestructible bats). To proceed, throughout the caverns you need to use a combination of jetpack and ladders (kindly left by the previous engineers), the ladders are used to descend and ascend the levels of the caverns.

To repair the leaking pipes you must trundle around until you are directly beneath the offending orifice and fire your plasma laser. After a few shots of this the hole reseals itself but there is one slight drawback, using the plasma gun drains your energy. The fuel level is not the only gauge that you have to keep an eye on because, as all good scouts know, you need oxygen to breath. This is provided for you in little tanks which have a limited amount of oxygen in them. When a tank is looking particularly low you must return to the surface and replenish the supply by plugging into the air tanks left by the scientists. The third indicator shows the pressure of the pipe — when this is full then the pipe is completed. The final gauge is used for your score.

You can move throughout the caverns at will but if you leave one cavern before repairing all the leaks then the leaks reappear, should you return. Along with other assorted nasties in the later caverns there are special teleport systems. These come in the form of tiny pads which are activated on pressing the SPACE key. If you are on one of these when SPACE is pressed then your atoms are propelled upwards to the teleport pad that is just above you, this serves as a quick and easy way of transversing the levels of a cavern. The caves themselves are reminiscent of those seen in old arcade games such as 'Space Panic' and the game plays in a similar way with a heavy emphasis on strategy.

At the beginning of the game you are given a full tank of oxygen and a complete bar of fuel along with three lives. The game ends when either you run out of oxygen, run out of fuel or lose all three lives. Should you manage to complete the set of caverns then the game returns to the beginning but this time the inhabitants of the Moon caves move much faster.

**Presentation 45%**
Just as all the other Blue Ribbon games, adequate instructions but little else.

**Graphics 38%**
Small, undetailed and generally poor.

**Sound 29%**
Hardly anything, just the odd spot effect.

**Playability 47%**
Quite easy to get into but difficult on later levels.

**Addictive qualities 30%**
Boredom sets in quite early on.

**Value for money 41%**
Still awful value despite the budget price.

**Overall 39%**
Could have been much better, it is the sort of game that shouldn't be gracing our Amstrads in this day and age.




# DIAMOND MINE II

**Blue Ribbon, £2.50 cass**

In a blast from the past, DIAMOND MINE II, takes us back to the pioneering days of computer games.

The scenario reports that having made it rich in Diamond Mine you have decided to try and repeat the phenomenon in your latest diamond infested mine, unaware of the dangers that await you.

*Diamond Mine II* is vaguely reminiscent of that old arcade game called 'Ant Eater'. In that game you had to guide your tongue through a maze to find and eat the ants, while in this game you have to collect diamonds using the help of your robotic friend, Diamo (he keeps the winch motor of the Hoover operating). Even with his help the game is not made easy because there are several eye-like objects actually guarding the diamond horde.

Because the mine is too small for you to actually take a trip down into it, a special Diamond Hoover has to be used, you just guide the tip of this towards the diamonds and it sucks them up for you, points are awarded for each diamond retrieved. During the engineering of this Hoover a couple of design problems were encountered, for instance the Hoover is unable to double back on itself so if you start in one direction you must continue in that direction until you come to a junction in the mine shafts. If you attempt to double back then the flex breaks and you lose a life. However, by pressing RETURN Diamo winds in and retracts some of the Hoover flex. The longer you keep Return held down the quicker the Hoover rewinds.

As mentioned above you still have the mine's inhabitants to contend with, and they aren't too pleased that you are attempting to steal their fortunes. Should one of the little critters come into contact with the Hoover pipe then they automatically gnaw through it, rendering it useless. Should this happen three times then the game ends. Luckily you do have a defence against them, just Hoover them up as you would the diamonds but beware because replacements arrive in no time at all.

The mine has many have many caverns to be explored and should you manage to succeed in entering the tenth cavern you find that it is pitch dark, because it is so far down. Here you have to find your way around the cave by touch, not easy especially as you've still got the guardians after you. Of course all you excellent games players out there should be able to cope.

**Presentation 44%**
Adequate instructions but generally inferior packaging.

**Graphics 31%**
Small, flickery characters that make poor use of colour.

**Sound 19%**
Very limited. Only the odd spot effect.

**Playability 48%**
Reasonably playable but nothing to get excited about.

**Addictive Qualities 29%**
Not enough variety in the game to give it much lasting appeal.

**Value for Money 37%**
Cheap but nasty.

**Overall 31%**
An old game that shows its age.

## CRITICISM

**1**

I remember playing a game like this in the arcades years ago, even then it wasn't very good. The graphics are very limited and flicker a lot but the few colours used are quite effective. DIAMOND MINE II is one of these games that is playable but you tend to lose interest after a short while, in fact I doubt that I will be going back to this one! Overall it is a very poor budget game especially when compared to the likes of SPELLBOUND.

**2**

The graphics on this game are very poor and the colour is drab. Just looking at the game can put you off it but it plays reasonably well. Otherwise I didn't find anything much worth bothering about, I found that I became increasingly bored as I progressed through the levels. *Diamond Mine II* resembles those old type of games that came free with the Amstrad some time back. I'm afraid for £2.50 this is not good enough particularly when Firebird and Mastertronic can consistantly turn out reasonable games for reasonable prices.

**3**

Just because this game is budget doesn't mean that Blue Ribbon can get away with selling drivel like this. The graphics are poor and some of them flicker while the colour is limited and adds little to the game. There is hardly any sound at all and what there is is limited to small effects here and there. Despite looking and sounding really bad the game is quite fun to play but there is hardly anything to it, so after progressing through a couple of caverns you become bored. If you've got £2.50 to spend then I would advise hanging on to it and get a better game unless you know that you liked the arcade game from which this is derived.

# FA CUP FOOTBALL

Virgin Games, £8.95 cass

## CRITICISM

**1** There are now quite a few football manager type games on the Amstrad the most notable is FOOTBALL MANAGER itself. FA CUP FOOTBALL is the only one that deals exclusively with the prestigious competition but the game itself plays rather like a cut down version of FOOTBALL MANAGER. While it is easy to get into there is very little depth to the game to make it addictive. Basing the game around simple decisions that are made a key press has its advantages but it tends to let the game down, pressing A, B or C for the bulk of the game soon becomes boring. Games of this sort rarely have spectacular graphics and FA CUP FOOTBALL is no exception to this. In fact presentation of the game is quite poor and off putting. This type of game appeals to many people but for me FOOTBALL MANAGER has much more depth to it.

**2** Managerial games are always quite fun to play and have a certain appeal that makes poor graphics and sound negligable. *FA Cup Football* is very much like this. Unlike many of its predecessors it is very easy to get into. Graphically the game is alright, Virgin have included some nice graphics but generally it is a bit disappointing coming from the creators of *Sorcery*. If you like this sort of game but for me it becomes a bit boring and easy to play.

**3** Reading the inlay leads one to believe that FA CUP FOOTBALL recreates all the thrills and spills of real life football management but sadly the game falls somewhat short of expectations. The graphics are quite good, especially the loading screen, but they are few and far between. Being a fan of this type of game I was hoping that Virgin would dream up some new ideas for the now ageing game format. Their approach consists of choosing one out of about a possible three solutions to problems. This soon becomes repetetive because formulae for success are soon concocted. On the whole a bit of a disappointment, though it may appeal to younger players.

Ever wanted to manage a football team? Now thanks to Virgin you can, in *FA Cup Football*. As the manager of ten teams it is your duty to get at least one of them through the preliminary rounds and hopefully to the finals. You start the game by picking the teams you wish to manage, it's then up to you to choose whether to start in the first round (along with the non-league clubs) or the third round where the bigger clubs join the competition. In the first couple of rounds you can also get unexpected results with little clubs beating the better, bigger, clubs (as in the real FA Cup).

As with real life next comes the FA Cup draw. You have no control over this stage of the game so just sit back and study who you will be playing. As you all know, tactics play an important part in football and deciding your team's formation can make the difference between winning and losing. There are three formations to choose from: attack, balanced and defensive. As Manager it is up to you which of these tactics your teams adopt.

Once all of the choices have been made for your matches, play begins. At the top of the screen a clock appears and shows the time elapsed. This can be speeded up should you find this stage boring. Below the clock is a list of matches that feature your teams. As time progresses the score updates and by the end of 90 minutes (not real-time) the final scores are revealed. Should any of your teams lose then they are knocked out of the competition, if they draw then a replay is in order and the team's tactics can be rechosen. When you are choosing your teams' strategies there is the option to look at a Newsflash. This may bring good or bad news and subsequently have an effect on your team's morale.

As your teams progress through the rounds, Mangagerial decisions are more frequent and important. Sometimes you are required to decide what to do about a particular player who's got into a spot of bother with the Police. By round four tactical decisions must be made at half time as well, so if all is not going well you are given a chance to alter your teams' prospects. If you manage to get a team through to round five you will discover that choices for tactics have to be made at quarter time as well as half time. Also in this round you are given the option to bring on a substitute at three quarters time. You are also required to answer a question that is designed to test your Managerial knowledge. Should you gain enough experience as Manager of certain teams it is possible to get your team into the finals. At the beginning of the game you are allowed to enter your own local club into the competition and so have a dream run, but have you got the skill required?

**Presentation 71%**
Concise instructions.

**Graphics 64%**
Sparse but good.

**Sound 32%**
Extremely poor for a game that could do with some sound.

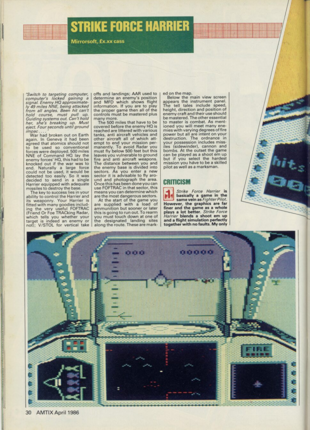
**Playability 80%**
Very easy get into.

**Addictive qualities 61%**
A bit easy to beat thus providing little challenge.

**Value for money 68%**
For the price there is little substance to the game.

**Overall 66%**
A surprisingly disappointing release from Virgin.


ocean
ULTIMATE PLAY THE GAME
U.S. GOLD
They sold a
MILLION
They sold a
MILLION II
BRUCE LEE
PSION
match point
MATCH DAY
The Hit SQUAD
FOUR TOP SELLERS IN ONE BIG PACK
EASTER SPECIAL
ALL THESE BLOCKBUSTERS TOGETHER ON ONE
GIANT COMPILATION
SPECTRUM £9.95
AMSTRAD £9.95
COMMODORE 64 £9.95
DISC £14.95
(COMMODORE and AMSTRAD)
Stocked at Selected Branches of:
W H Smith, Boots, John Menzies
Woolworth, Greens, Laskys and Rumbelows
ENTOMBED REPLACES KNIGHT LORE ON THE COMMODORE 64
MORE FOR LESS
from...
The Hit SQUAD
6 CENTRAL STREET, MANCHESTER M2 5NS. TELEPHONE: 061-832 6633. TELEX: 669977




# STRIKE FORCE HARRIER

**Mirrorsoft, £x.xx cass**

*'Switch to targeting computer, computer's locked gaining a signal. Enemy HQ approximately 49 miles NNE, being attacked from all angles. Been hit can't hold course, must pull up. Guiding systems out. Can't hold her, she's breaking up. Must eject. Four seconds until ground impac . . . .'*

War had broken out on Earth again. In Geneva it had been agreed that atomics should not to be used so conventional forces were deployed. 500 miles NNE of Command HQ lay the enemy forces' HQ, this had to be knocked out if the war was to end. Naturally a large force could not be used, it would be detected too easily. So it was decided to send in a single Harrier equipped with adequate missiles to destroy the base.

The key to success lies in your ability to control the Harrier and its weaponry. Your Harrier is fitted with many goodies including the very useful FOFTRAC (Friend Or Foe TRACking Radar, which tells you whether your target is indeed an enemy or not); V/STOL for vertical take offs and landings; AAR used to determine an enemy's position and MFD which shows flight information. If you are to play the proper game then all of the controls must be mastered plus many more.

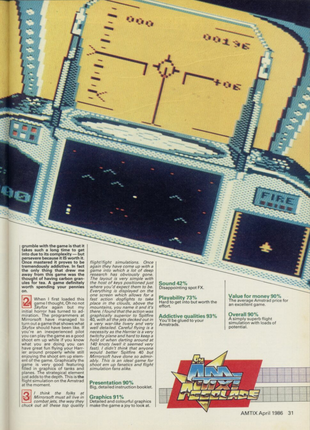
The 500 miles that have to be covered before the enemy HQ is reached are littered with various tanks, anti aircraft vehicles and other aircraft all of which attempt to end your mission permanently. To avoid Radar you must fly below 500 feet but this leaves you vulnerable to ground fire and anti aircraft weapons. The distance between you and the enemy base is divided into sectors. As you enter a new sector it is advisable to fly around and photograph the area. Once this has been done you can use FOFTRAC in that sector, this means you can determine which are the most dangerous sectors.

At the start of the game you are supplied with a load of ammunition but sooner or later this is going to run out. To rearm you must touch down at one of the designated landing sites along the route. These are marked on the map.

Below the main view screen appears the instrument panel. The tell tales include speed, height, direction and position of enemy craft and their use should be mastered. The other essential to master is combat. As mentioned you will meet many enemies with varying degrees of fire power but all are intent on your destruction. The ordnance in your possession includes missiles (sidewinder), cannon and bombs. At the outset the game can be played as a shoot em up but if you select the hardest mission you have to be a skilled pilot as well as a marksman.

## CRITICISM

**1** *Strike Force Harrier* **is basically a game in the same vein as** *Fighter Pilot*. **However, the graphics are far finer and the game as a whole plays a lot better.** *Strike Force Harrier* **blends a shoot em up and a flight simulation perfectly together with no faults. My only**




**grumble with the game is that it takes such a long time to get into due to its complexity — but persevere because it IS worth it. Once mastered it proves to be tremendously addictive. In fact the only thing that drew me away from this game was the thought of having carbon granules for tea. A game definitely worth spending your pennies on.**

**2** When I first loaded this game I thought, Oh no not *Skyfox* again but my initial horror has turned to admiration. The programmers at Mirrorsoft have managed to turn out a game that shows what *Skyfox* should have been like. If you're an inexperienced pilot you can play the game as a good shoot em up while if you know what you are doing you can have great fun flying your Harrier around properly while still enjoying the shoot em up element of the game. Graphically the game is very good featuring filled in graphics of tanks and planes. The strategical element just adds to the depth. This is **the** flight simulation on the Amstrad at the moment.

**3** *I think the folks at Mirrorsoft must all live in combat jets, the way they chuck out all these top quality flight/fight simulations. Once again they have come up with a game into which a lot of deep research has obviously gone. The layout is very simple with the host of keys positioned just where you'd expect them to be. Everything is displayed on the one screen which allows for a fast action dogfights to take place in the clouds, above the mountains, you name it and it's there. I found that the action was graphically superior to* Spitfire 40, *with all the jets decked out in a very war-like livery and very well detailed. Careful flying is a necessity as the Harrier is a very twitchy plane and hard to keep a hold of when darting around at 140 knots (well it seemed very fast). I didn't think that anyone would better* Spitfire 40 *but Mirrorsoft have done so admirably. This is an ideal game for shoot em up fanatics and flight simulation fans alike.*

**Presentation 90%**
Big, detailed instruction booklet.

**Graphics 91%**
Detailed and colourful graphics make the game a joy to look at.

**Sound 42%**
Disappointing spot FX.

**Playability 73%**
Hard to get into but worth the effort.

**Addictive qualities 93%**
You'll be glued to your Amstrads.

**Value for money 90%**
The average Amstrad price for an excellent game.

**Overall 90%**
A simply superb flight simulation with loads of potential.

# BATTLE OF THE PLANETS




Mikro-Gen, £9.95 cass

## CRITICISM

**1** If you take away the ability to change colours, what you have with the Amstrad version is exactly the same as the Spectrum. That isn't, in itself a bad thing, because other versions are quite good. The line graphics are fairly neat, but some really amazing feat ure like real time windowing would have made it go down much better with me. It's playable, and has quite an element of addictivity. The challenge of it, generally, is increased by the national hi-score competition thingummy, which lets you record and hear any really good scores via the 'phone. The instructions leave quite a bit to be desired, and could have gone into much more detail about playing the game. Overall, quite a good game, but I'm a little unsure as to whether or not it's really good value for money.

**2** *Battle of the Planets* takes the shoot em up aspect out of *Elite* and places it in a *Dark Star* type game. Unfortunately there isn't much to it apart from shooting and the occasional docking which is much too easy and so leads to a very boring game which could have been developed well. I found the game very pleasing to the eye, with some nicely animated vector graphic ships. I like the way all the information is displayed around the edge of the ship which makes fast play much easier. Presentation is of quite high quality but I felt this is the only part which gives any resemblance to the TV program on which it is based.

**3** The graphics on BATTLE OF THE PLANETS aren't anything special but they do move rather well, just a touch slower than those on STARION. In fact the game is just like the shoot em up sections of other vector graphic games. While it proves enjoyable it tends to get boring after a while. If there had been a bit more variety in the game it would have made it much better. But if you like shoot em ups then it's certainly one to think about

Zark 7, the head of Centre Neptune, has received a report that Zoltar, the man everybody loves to hate, has declared war on the Universe! Of course he can't do this all by himself, in fact he has enlisted the help of various alien craft.

Contained within your Universe are five planetary systems, these are under threat from Zoltar and his evil hordes. Surrounding each planet are alien space ships which, after a certain amount of time has elapsed, will land and destroy civilisation on that planet. This will then give Zoltar a vantage point from which he can attack Earth. It is obvious to Zark 7 that this is a job for G Force!

Naturally G Force (in other words you) accepts this mission and before you can say 'Mikro-Gen' the Phoenix is powered up and heading towards the endangered system. During the journey through space you see various graphics. These are the symbols for distant hyper space gates, alien space craft and planets. If you move your gunsights over the space gate symbol you find the real space gate zooming towards, and once you have flown into this you can then choose which planetary system to go to by pressing 1 - 5. Should you move your sights over the alien craft symbol then in the distance the real craft appears coming towards you in vector graphics. The planet symbol calls up the planet which you can fly into. If you do this you are then presented with a view of the planet's surface. Shooting the aliens in space means that there are less of them to attack the planet, points are scored for each alien destroyed.

As mentioned above, the planets get attacked as time goes by. The only way to stop a planet from being destroyed, once alien fighters have gone into orbit, is to go down on to the planet and start taking out the fighters one by one. The Phoenix can take quite a lot of punishment but if you get into difficulties there are repair and refuel pods on the planet with which you can dock to improve the state of your ship.

Your ship is equipped with two different types of weaponry — lasers and neutron missiles. Constant use of the lasers results in them over heating and in order to protect yourself you will have to switch to the missile defence system. Once launched, a missile dynamically homes in on its target but the enemy ship may take evasive action.

Piloting the Phoenix is fairly easy but to help you out there are five status screens, only one appearing at a time. The first gives details on the condition of shields, the second provides information on fuel, thrust and hull temperature, the third screen details how many landers are attacking the planet and how long the planet has to survive, the fourth screen shows how many neutron torpedos the Phoenix has left and finally screen five shows the temperature of the laser system and how much laser power is left.

**Presentation 80%**
Detailed instructions and nice packaging.

**Graphics 88%**
Great hidden line vector graphics which move smoothly and fast!

**Sound 72%**
Nice opening tune but otherwise limited.

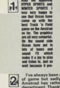
**Playability 75%**
Easy to get into and fun to play.

**Addictive qualities 69%**
It's a pity that there couldn't have been more to the game.

**Value for money 65%**
A bit steep for what there is.

**Overall 77%**
A good shoot em up but lacks a bit in content.

# DALEY THOMPSON'S SUPERTEST



Ocean, £8.95 cass
Machines: all

**Lining up your sights for the pistol shooting — speed as well as accuracy counts towards the score.**

It has been a long time since the release of *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* and since then there have been very few exceptional Track and Field type games. *Daley Thompson's Supertest* sets that all to rights and brings eight brand new events to the Amstrad.

As with DT's Decathlon the game is split into two parts **Day 1** and **Day 2** on either side of the cassette, the main drawback with this system is that it isn't possible to carry your Day 1 score over to Day 2. Day 1 features **Pistol Shooting**, **Cycling**, **Spring Board Diving** and the **Great Slalom**. Whilst Day 2 features **Rowing**, **Penalties**, **Ski Jump** and **Tug O' War**.

For each event there is a qualifying score which you must equal or surpass otherwise you lose one of your three Daleys. Once all three have been lost the game ends. To start with the qualifying scores are fairly low and with a little practice it is easy to beat them but once you have done the events on one side they start all over again except the qualifying scores get higher. Having gone through all the events once, you can then sit back and watch the awards ceremony complete with accompanying music from the film 'Chariots of Fire'.

### Pistol Shooting

The main difference between this game and *DT's Decathlon* is the control method. Not all the events require you to hammer hell out of the joystick just achieve a respectable score. The pistol shooting is one such example. You are presented with a view of six targets. When one target turns around you must guide your gunsights up to the target and press fire. Your score depends on how quick you are and how accurate a shot you fire.

### Cycling

This is similar to the 400m in *DT's Decathlon* except it takes place, not unsurprisingly, on a bike. You just waggle the joystick left to right as fast as possible to gain speed, then keep this pace up until the end of the course is reached.

### Spring Board Diving

You must jump up and down on the spring board and then launch yourself into the air. The aim of this event is to land correctly in the pool after performing as many sommersaults as possible. Marks are given for number of sommersaults, take off, dive finish and overall grace.

### Giant Slalom

First of all push of then waggle the joystick left and right quickly for a short while, this builds up your speed. Then press fire to transfer to movement mode. From now on you must guide Daley through the flag poles in as quick a time as possible.

### Rowing

In this event you compete against the clock and the computer — beating both earns you a bonus. To row just waggle the joystick left and right as quickly as possible until the end of the course is reached.

### Penalties

Daley starts running towards the ball immediately so waggle the joystick to build up his kicking power. When the ball is reached press fire to shoot at the goal. The angle of the shot depends on how long fire is kept depressed.

### Ski Jump

As you begin to ski down the slope waggle the joystick left and right to gain speed, this is so that you jump further. When the end of the slope is reached press fire to launch Daley into the air. When you are about to land press fire again to determine the type of landing.

### Tug O' War

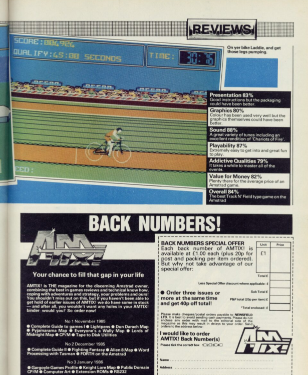
Select your opponent and when the match begins just waggle the joystick furiously until your opponent is dragged over the line, to signal your victory.

## CRITICISM

**1** After the appalling HYPER SPORTS and WINTER SPORTS I was very happy to see that Ocean have come up with the best Track 'n Field game on the Amstrad so far. The graphics are all very colourful. On the sound side Ocean have put in lots of tunes and sound FX which make it a joy to play and listen to, just as well because it provides a well earned rest between events. The only drawback is that is the double load system used, I suppose this can be forgiven considering the amount of tunes in the game. Some of the events are far from easy especially the Giant Slalom. Overall I found it very easy to get into and generally a fun game.

**2** I've always been a fan of this type of game but sadly until now the Amstrad has rather lacked in this department. Thankfully Ocean have bought out this excellent game. The graphics are not the best seen but the game is so playable that it makes up for it. *Supertest* features such a variety of tunes that I would rank it as amongst the best sounding Amstrad games. If you know you like this type of game then get it, now!

**3** Ocean have put together a game that features a great variety of events to test your arcade skills. The graphics work quite well and colour has been used very nicely, a delight to look at. The game itself is very playable and there is always the compulsion to return to it later. If you like sports simulations then this is one to get, definitely worth £8.95




On yer bike Laddie, and get those legs pumping.

**Presentation 83%**
Good instructions but the packaging could have been better.

**Graphics 80%**
Colour has been used very well but the graphics themselves could have been better.

**Sound 88%**
A great variety of tunes including an excellent rendition of 'Chariots of Fire'.

**Playability 87%**
Extremely easy to get into and great fun to play.

**Addictive Qualities 79%**
It takes a while to master all of the events.

**Value for Money 82%**
Plenty there for the average price of an Amstrad game.

**Overall 84%**
The best Track N' Field type game on the Amstrad

# WORKING BACKWARDS




**Design Design, £14.95, disk only**

**GARY LIDDON takes a look at an unusual disk compilation.**

The *Working Backwards* disk by Design Design is a collection of all their Amstrad games to date. That would be a bit dull wouldn't it, well yes it would, so as an added bonus it even includes an Amstrad game they hadn't written to date: *Halls of the Things*. Anyway before I drone on and on about *Halls*, I might as well give a quick summary of the other games on the disk.

## DARK STAR

First is *Dark Star*, a line drawing algorithm. Well to be most perfectly honest there is a little teensy weensy bit more in it than that. Yes, *Dark Star* can plot points as well. And there is a game of sorts in it as well. The most time is spent zooming over planet things and blasting at land targets, refuelling and flying through rectangles. When this isn't the case you usually find yourself trogging through vacuum at high speed, blowing up enemy fighters who aren't particularly keen on your presence in their space.

The whole is viewed through a screen wide scanner. For all you techno—pornocrats out there *Dark Star* features 3D vector graphics happily updated at the nastily fast rate of every frame flyback. Not only that but it also says bye-bye to the jumpblock and treats the machine as a Z80 computer with 64K and a few I/O chips slashed onto it (I hope that's right). Anyway, all in all it's a jolly good blast though a little on the dull side at times. Impressive to look at, it is however.

## TANK BUSTERS

Yet another line drawing algorithm but there's a really good game in this. *Tankbusters* is the Brattel reinterpretation (reassemblage?) of *Rommel's Revenge*, an averagely received program originally on the Spectrum and released by Crystal (as they were known then). Its new Amstrad incarnation has really made the most of its environment. First I'd better explain, *Tank Busters'* original inspiration comes from 'Battlezone', a now classic arcade game. Though not an exact clone, the extra features added make *Tank Busters* far more interesting than its parental.

Front ended by the now famous proportionately spaced Design Design text, it is possible to tailor the game to your needs, however perverted they may well be. Two weapons are strapped onto your tank, a missile launcher and another missile launcher. They are different though, the first fires missiles while the second fire a different kind of missile. The different kind are very neat indeed, once fired the tank is imobilised until the rocket reaches its range or hits a target. That's not the neat bit, what's so good is that it's possible to guide the flying thingy left and right. Even neater is the ability to see everything from a missile's eye view after a bit of twiddly with the front end. The other kind of rocket is dead dull and just whizzes along the over the vector tundra. Flying at enormous speeds over the 3D landscape is a lot of fun. *Tank Busters* combines the technical wonderment of *Dark Star* with a highly enjoyable, and versatile, version of 'Battlezone'.

## HALLS OF THE THINGS

*Halls* is the most un—derivative game yet to be produced from Design Design and there's not a line drawing algorithm to be seen. A sort of review can be found in the last month Des Des laccy band competition on page 40. The review is inaccurate (my claim to blame) but should give a fair idea as to what you'd expect to find. What can be said is that the graphics are awful and the sound non-existent but it has since become one of my favourite games yet. Definitely worth the perseverance of mastering the contortionate keyboard controls.

## LAST BUT NOT LEAST . . . .

*On The Run* marked a departure from the usual Design Design style and actually featured *sprites*. Gosh, Simon Brattel has always hated those. *On The Run* was fully reviewed in issue one on page 106. A prestigious 89% was awarded though it's my least favourite of the four titles on the disk. Mainly because arcade adventures aren't really my cup of tea at all. Still if you do like this sort thing then *On The Run* is a very good example of monsters in a maze full of useful objects to collect sort of game.

## OVERALL

All in all *Working Backwards* is a very nice package indeed and well worth the money asked of it. Even if you own all the previously released Design Design software, *Working Backwards* is probably just worth buying for *Halls* and the secret message on the main menu. It makes a few very pertinent points about women and real ale, that are very true and well worth taking note of.

# SAVE THE GALAXY AND WIN THE ULTIMATE ROBOT -THE ROBOTIX 4000

**THE YEAR IS 2050. ROBOTS NO LONGER CARRY THE IMAGE THAT WAS ORIGINALLY THE BRAINCHILD OF A MARKETING MANAGER WHO WAS A CHARMLESS NURD AND CONSEQUENTLY FIRST AGAINST THE WALL AFTER THE ROBOT WARS.**

**Your 'Plastic Pal who's fun to be with', is now a highly sophisticated piece of machinery that is infinitely adaptable to any tasks that you care to program into it...**

### GALACTIC COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE

DINGBOT Remote Automatic News Telecaster R.A.N.T. Hello. I am a DINGBOT Remote Automatic News Telecaster but you can call me R.A.N.T. I've been sent to tell you all about the happenings at the Council. They're in a bit of a bind at the moment what with them all worrying about the ROBOTIC WARS and all. I don't know what they worry about, they don't get sent all over the Galaxy in the loading bay of a slow and dusty old Malcolm Class transporter. The dirt and grease is everywhere and plays havoc with my sensory circuits but what do they care — Hang on — Yes yes, I'm doing it — Oh dear, I've just been told to relay the Council message. I don't know why, it's hardly as exciting as the things I get up to but — Yes I'm just about to — Oh really, I don't know why I do this, I could have been programmed as a courier class — Yes, yes, I'm DOING IT! — Oh here goes —
— GALACTIC COUNCIL —
PRESS RELEASE
DISTRIBUTION — GALAXY WIDE
— The ROBOTIX 4000 is the greatest single achievement that the 21st century has produced, a crowning accolade to the technology and daring of this wonderful planet of ours. It is however with the renewed interest in ROBOTECH that this Council remembers the tragedy of the ROBO WARS that tore at the very fabric of the Galaxy and it is the recurrent fear of this destruction that we are asking you, the people, to submit designs for a ROBOT that will have ultimate responsibility for the safety of this planet.

This is a mammoth undertaking and one that this council does not take lightly. It is with this in mind that we asked Computer Rentals Limited to award to the top designer, a working scale model of the ROBOTIX 4000 complete with remote control and a copy of a game that CRL wrote back in the 20th Century called TAU CETI. If your design isn't selected by the council for production but is a commendable effort then 5 awards will be made of a DINGBOT and the Tau Ceti game and 25 runners up will receive a copy of the game too.

The council hope you will appreciate the need for urgency in this matter so once you have designed your ultimate robot, pop the drawings/plans into a transporter pack and drop them into a telepost collection point and use the following co-ordinates: AMTIX!, SAVE THE GALAXY, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB to arrive here by Earth date 20th April. Good Luck — the future of the Galaxy is in your hands!!

AMTIX! COMPETITION

# THE 1985 AMTIX! R

## BEST GAME OVERALL

### SORCERY
**Virgin Games**

Here is the first of many awards and placings for Virgin's arcade adventure, with little doubt in anyone's mind as to the winner of this category. In second place was EXPLODING FIST from Melbourne House, and following very closely came Imagine's martial arts YIE AR KUNG FU.

## BEST PLATFORM GAME

### JET SET WILLY
**Software Projects**

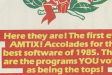
This classic platformer won easily, leaving US Gold's BRUCE LEE some way behind in second place, while another Software Projects offering, BOUNTY BOB, slotted into third place.

## BEST SHOOT EM UP

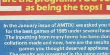
### STARION
**Melbourne House**

Despite it's mind-puzzle overtones, the high speed vector action of STARION convinced most readers of its shoot em up merits. A tight finish, though, for close behind came 3D STARSTRIKE from Realtime. The third place slot was shared by BEACH HEAD from US Gold and DEFEND OR DIE by Alligata.



**Here they are! The first ever AMTIX! Accolades for the best software of 1985. These are the programs YOU voted as being the tops!**



In the January issue of AMTIX! we asked you to vote for the best games of 1985 under several headings. The inputting from many forms has been done, the collations made and now, here are the results — the games you thought deserved applause.

The results are presented in the same order as the voting form, and we show not only the winners but also the second and third placings in each category.

## BEST ARCADE ADVENTURE

### SORCERY
**Virgin Games**

Strong competition in this category was still resisted by sorcerers everywhere leaving Gargoyle Games' MARSPORT in second place and KNIGHT LORE picking up third place honours for Ultimate.

## BEST TEXT-ONLY ADVENTURE

### MORDON'S QUEST
**Melbourne House**

This was not an altogether unsuprisingly close two horse race with the photo-finish going against the grandfather of all adventure games, COLOSSAL ADVENTURE which finished in second place. Third place went to SNOWBALL, another Level 9 stable mate.

## BEST GRAPHICAL ADVENTURE

### RED MOON
**Level 9**

Not many problems here, with Level 9 sweeping the board to out LORDS OF MIDNIGHT from Beyond in the number two slot. Third place went to Virgin's ubiquitous SORCERY but only after a stewards' inquiry.

## BEST FLIGHT SIMULATION

### FIGHTER PILOT
**Digital Integration**

This conversion from the venerable Spectrum air warfare game hurtled in at Mach 3 without resistance. Second place went to COMBAT LYNX by Durell who just pipped Database's RED ARROWS and SPITFIRE 40 by Mirrorsoft who both shared third place proving that flying is not all just burning around breaking wind all over the air lanes.

## BEST SPORTS SIMULATION

### HYPERSPORTS
**Imagine**

This was a convincing win and came well ahead of the second placed DALEY THOMPSON'S DECATHLON released by Ocean. Third place honours were awarded to the WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST from Melbourne House.

# READERS AWARDS

machines and bodies all the time.

## BEST WARGAME

### BATTLE OF BRITAIN
**PSS**

The first place slot was almost shared here, so close was the voting, and US Gold's gun toting BEACH HEAD made a close second. Serious strategy took third place with CCS's ARNHEM, proving that not everyone likes to watch exploding war








## BEST GRAPHICS

### SORCERY
**Virgin Games**

SORCERY took over a third of the votes under this heading, leaving the opposition way behind whilst it picked up its second major honour. YIE AR KUNG FU by Imagine and Vortex's HIGHWAY ENCOUNTER took second and third place respectively with only one vote separating them!

## BEST SOUND FX

### SORCERY
**Virgin Games**

It seems that Virgin have produced a game that is a winner for more than any one single reason. It certainly isn't due to lack of competition though with the joint second places being taken by SPY VS SPY by Beyond and Imagine's YIE AR KUNG FU both well represented in the voting.

## BEST MUSIC

### GHOST BUSTERS
**Activision**

It would seem likely that a film that produced a top ten hit and was incredibly successful at the box office should lend its tune to this category. SORCERY yet again managed to push its nose into the voting to collect a second place prize for Virgin.

Third place was taken again by a movie soundtrack this time the music to the game A VIEW TO A KILL by Domark.

## TACKIEST GAME OF THE YEAR

### ASSAULT ON PORT STANLEY
**Edgar Belka**

This single category showed the largest variation in game names but eventually first place seemed to go to the rightful owner but only by a margin of a few votes. Voting seemed to be very fair and second place was awarded to three separate titles. They were: BRIDGE IT by Amsoft, ROLAND ON THE ROPES by Amsoft and EXPLODING FIST by Melbourne House!

## STATE OF THE ART AWARD

### SORCERY
**Virgin**

What other result did you expect!? This coveted award will soon be hanging up on the wall of Virgin Games' offices alongside a fairly extensive collection of titles convincingly given to SORCERY. Second place went to EXPLODING FIST — that should help ease Melbourne House's embarrassment at appearing under the Tacky heading. Third place goes to YIE AR KUNG FU and Imagine.

So that's it for the 1985 AMTIX! Readers Awards. Congratulations to all the software houses who were voted best at what they did, and a big thank you to all the AMTIX! readers who took the trouble to fill in their forms and send them back to us.

The Award winners will all be receiving their 'coveted' trophies as soon as someone up in Admin can get them organised, and that leaves us with nothing further to do but announce the voting form winners. We said 15 forms would be drawn from the bag, earning their senders a voucher for £15 worth of software as well as an AMTIX! T-shirt.

And here you are, you lucky voters . . .

**Nadina Benvenisti, Rustington, Sussex; Phil Smith, Greenford, Middlesex; RG Messenger, Abernethy, Perth; Adam Rykala, Glan Ebbw, Blaina; Robert Hallett, Tring, Herts; Alan Howard, Cheadle, Cheshire; RA Stockman, Yeovil, Somerset; J Peberdy, Odiham; Christopher Hester, Baildon, W Yorkshire; Stuart Cresswell, Worthing; Brian Edmunds, Goldings, Northampton; Lee Healy, Walsall; P Williams, Cambridge; Andrew May, Wakefield; Stewart McIntyre, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow.**

# A DIFFERENT KIND OF WARFARE

The name **MC Lothlorien** has always implied strategy wargames for a few years now. The company itself began life with the arrival of the Spectrum. Roger Lees and Mike Cohen, old school friends with a passion for wargaming, started writing games on the ZX81 and selling them by mail order as a hobby. By the time Clive Sinclair launched his rubber-keyed computer, the hobby had expanded to the point where Mike and Roger had to take it seriously. Thus MC Lothlorien was born as the two trading companies run by Mike and Roger, **MC Associates** and **Lothlorien**, amalgamated, and a series of games began.

Mike and Roger started writing strategy wargames, and as their company grew the product range diversified to include arcade games released under the **Actionmaster** label. After a while, Lothlorien's forte, strategy games, came to the fore and arcade action faded into the background. Recent developments, however, may lead to some very different products indeed.

Mike's particular wargaming interest is focussed on the Ancient period and he has an entire Macedonian army to prove it! Roger has a keen interest in the American Civil War and has been involved in several simulations of battles from this era. But their interest doesn't stop with 'toy' soldiers. Computer simulations and wargames produced by companies such as SPI and Avalon Hill have led to many late nights. *Trireme* is a particular favourite — a game in which the player controls ancient navies, manoeuvring immense galleons and boarding enemy vessels. Mike and Roger's enthusiasm for the genre is evident, and carries through into their business lives.

Nowadays the two founding partners have more than enough to keep them busy with running their company, with Mike acting as Managing Director and Roger taking on the Marketing responsibility. They are aided and abetted by two secretaries, Arline and Helen, who complete the administrative team and nowadays programming is left to in-house teams and freelances.

In some respects, running a software house successfully over a period of years is like playing a huge strategy game — Mike and Roger find the analogy quite fitting. In the past they have had a few close shaves, and admit as much, but now feel that they have learned from these. There's little doubt that Lothlorien will be around for a few years more.

Back in May last year, Lothlorien entered into a contract with Argus Press Software, under which Argus takes care of the marketing and distribution effort for some of Lothlorien's new products. 'We have some very good games,' Mike explained, 'and felt that we couldn't really do them full justice, so we entered into a contract with Argus, to take advantage of their marketing and distribution expertise.'

So far this partnership has worked well — *The Bulge* was the first game to be put onto the market by Argus, followed by *Arena* — sadly neither for the Amstrad just yet . . .

**A N' F Software** is another

While the men do battle, the women keep the home fires burni[ng] — secretaries Helen (left) and Arline.

Dave Selwood (left) and Peter Carmpouloni are two of Lothlorien's in-house programming team.

Roger Lees (left) and Mike Cohen — started with an interest in history and the Sinclair ZX81.

**Were you a Spectrum owner, then you would think the name LOTHLORIEN almost synonymous with war and strategy gaming. This venerable software house has successfully weathered many of the storms that has beset the industry from its infancy, and is now poised to launch many of its products for the Amstrad. SEAN MASTERSON visited Lothlorien's base in Poynton to investigate the new developments.**

company which has a similar marketing deal with Argus, and Roger and Mike are teaming up with Doug Anderson and Martin Hickling of A 'N' F to form a third company. All the in-house programmers will soon be moved to new premises in Prestwich to form a game development company by the name of Starsoft UK Ltd. Five teams of programmers will be working on separate projects at any one time, as well as individual freelance coders. 'We felt we should do something new', Mike said 'so a third company has been set up with A N' F. They have the technical expertise while we have game designing skills which are complimentary.' By making the best of Lothlorien's strategy acumen and A 'N' F's arcade abilities some exciting hybrid games could be developed.

Good news for Amsters will come from Starsoft. So far, only three Lothlorien games have appeared on the Amstrad: *Johnny Reb*, *Special Operations* and *Redcoats*. Conversions of *Waterloo* and *Austerlitz* are on the way, it seems and should be ready for Amsters by Easter along with *Time Sanctuary*, but all new games should be produced for the Amstrad, Commodore and Spectrum. *Johnny Reb* is one of the earlier Lothlorien games, set in the American Civil War as the title suggests. Your objective is to capture the flag of the enemy unit. *Special Operations* appeared on the Spectrum some eighteen months ago and is a more complex adventure/strategy game in which you have to penetrate and search and enemy complex. At the start of the game you need to pick a team of four people, interviewing from a pool of candidates and selecting accomplices with the appropriate skills before choosing which of the seven available objectives you wish to persue.

A couple more early Lothlorien games should be converted for Straddles' consumption in due course, including *Arena*, but programming resources is the problem according to Mike. Obviously conversions have to be done alongside new development work, and Z80 programmer time is a scarce commodity at the moment . . .

Peter Carmpouloni and Dave Selwood are the in-house programmers currently working on an animated adventure called *Stellar Holocaust* which is being produced for Argus and they are working on the Spectrum and Commodore versions respectively. Both have had plenty of previous experience in programming: Peter wrote the adventure *Time Sanctuary* on the Spectrum but his career goes back to the days of the ill-fated **Red Shift** for whom he wrote *City of Death* with his brother, George; Dave is an ex-Ocean man with several titles under his belt including *Mr Wimpy*, *Rollerball*, *Caterpillar* (on the Vic 20) and *Road Frog*. *Stellar Holocaust* should also be appearing on the Amstrad around March/April time according to the Production Manger at Argus, and it could not be more different from any of Pete and Dave's previous projects — it's a sort of *Lords of Midnight* in space type game . . .

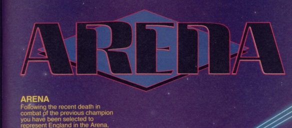
Lothlorien have a number of projects underway, and will continue to write and release strategy wargames on their own account, independently of the Starsoft UK set-up. *Borodino* should arrive some time after *Stellar Holocaust* and continues the saga of Napoleon's attack on Russia in the nineteenth century. This game's features will include the regrouping of units and the use of artillery, the absence of which attracted some criticism for *Waterloo*. The Spectrum version is likely to hit the streets first, with Amsters having to wait a little longer to get to grips with the battle.

Lothlorien feel that their games might not always hit the top ten, but they do have an incredibly long life span — but they also know that keeping up with the market is fundamental to the success of anyone in a business which has seen the downfall of so many companies over just a few years. Mike Cohen and Roger Lees seem suitably equipped to cater for the future. The best form of defence is attack, and Lothlorien seem ready to make theirs . . . .

There's a rosy wargaming future ahead for Amsters, who should soon be able to get to grips with some of Lothlorien's classic games before too long. If you're a keen wargamer who happens to be an Amstrad programmer, you might be able to hasten things along a little . . .


Cheetah
Marketing
are proud to announce
the arrival of their
125 Joystick
SpecDrum digital
drum machine
for the Amstrad
coming soon.
125
SPEED
AHEAD
Cheetah
with this
NEW JOYSTICK
from Cheetah
Compatible with ZX Spectrum,48K,128K,Commodore 64, Vic 20, Amstrad, Atari, MSX, etc.
At only £8.95 the features on the 125 are second to none Besides its unique internal structure, built to withstand immense punishment from even the most vigorous games player, the joystick contains no less than four extremely sensitive fire buttons. Two are housed in the handgrip which has been moulded for extra comfort and ease of operation. The trigger finger fire button provides ease and comfort for your finger and the top fire button is contoured to fit your thumb for sure fire shooting. The base fire buttons are positioned for extra control and two hand firing whether you are right or left handed.
A built in auto-fire switch provides continuous shooting at the touch of a fire button.
The 125 comes complete with a full 12 months warranty and is available from John Menzies WHSMITH High Street stores and all good computer shops.
ONLY
£8.95
Price include VAT, Postage and Packing. Delivery normally 14 days
Export orders at no extra cost. Dealer enquiries welcome.
Send cheque/PO now to:-
Cheetah Marketing Ltd.
1, Willowbrook Science Park, Crickhowell Road, St. Mellons, Cardiff
Telephone: (0222) 777337 Telex: 497455

LOTHLORIEN'S




**ARENA**

Following the recent death in combat of the previous champion you have been selected to represent England in the Arena, the 21st Century's warground. Have you the skill and application to prove yourself a champion?

Available for:
**SPECTRUM 48K**
**AMSTRAD**
**£9.95**



Available from all good software shops.
In case of difficulty write to:

**LOTHLORIEN**
Liberty House, 222 Regent Street, London W1R 7DB




# THEATRE EUROPE

**PSS, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys**

*Theatre Europe*. The very mention of the word conjures images of CND banners, arguing politicians and a barren, nightmarish wasteland where life as we know it has ceased to be. This is what this game is about, the grim reality of a nuclear holocaust. Before any with strong feelings start to argue the points of mixing the horrific consequences of war and computer games the object of *Theatre Europe* is to **avoid** any sort of nuclear confrontation.

The game offers options for a single player v computer, a two payer head-to-head or a demo version where the computer plays itself. The latter option is very interesting and quite frightening. If you purchase the game I strongly recommend you sit down and watch what happens!

Although this is essentially a war game it uses a series of screens to depict the action in a very atmospheric way. There is also an arcade action screen for those who are maybe more accustomed to shooting things. At the start of the game there is an option allowing the player to choose whether or not to use the action screens (serious wargamers should **not** take this option). When your battleforces are either under attack or attacking, you are asked to select a battle. Move the cursor over the desired unit and a picture of a plain with a city in the background is presented with planes, helicopters and tanks moving about.

A target cursor is placed under your control in similar style to *Missile Command* and this is used to destroy the enemy. The tanks which trundle up and down the road in the foreground are your forces. Be careful not to hit them as they fire at the planes too and can bring them down.

Your success or failure on this screen — ie how many tanks and planes you destroy with how many missiles, plays a major part in the game. Your performance is taken into consideration as a strength factor deciding the fate of your forces elsewhere, so if you do badly in this phase then expect severe losses all round.

Once you've decided whether or not to take the action screens you can select the forces you would like to command, either the Warsaw Pact or NATO. If you are commanding the Warsaw Pact then special units are made available to you. These are the 1st Airborne Army and the 1st Amphibious Army, the former can be flown directly behind enemy lines whilst the latter can move over the sea to a tactical attack point.

Once that's all sorted out the game level can be selected from the three provided. Each level plays an increasing standard of conventional warfare: level one plays a totally conventional war game and, unless provoked, does not use the nuclear or chemical option, whilst levels two and three see the computer using nuclear and chemical options to prevent you winning the game. Level three plays a highly intelligent and unpredictable game and nuclear escalation on this level is usually enormous.

With the level selected a detailed map of Europe and Western Russia (including Moscow) is presented showing mountain ranges, capital cities, country borders and all the armed forces of both sides.

First you have the option to **move** your units. Simply place your box-like cursor over the desired unit, press fire button and then move the cursor to the position to which you want the unit to move. You can only move one character space at a time and the unit moves as soon as you press the fire button again.

Once all moves have been decided the **attack** phase follows. This uses the same sort of control as moving, this time positioning the cursor over the enemy unit you wish to attack. Any amount of your units can attack a single enemy army, but once a unit is sent into battle it cannot be halted until the phase is over.

When all the attacking moves have been decided a press of the space bar starts the fighting. If the action screen option has been chosen then the computer asks the player to select a battle, whereupon the action screen takes place. If the action screens aren't operational then the battle is decided on merits of air superiority, supplies and armament.

After the battle, you can **rebuild** your units with somewhat scant supplies. Firstly you are given a quantity of armament supplies which can be issued to the more desperate forces by positioning the cursor over the unit and pressing fire a certain number of times according to how many supplies you want sent. With every type of supply you must carefully plan the rebuilding schedule: once a supply is sent it cannot be reclaimed.

The next batch of supplies to come in are the air support. These are used to rebuild your units in similar fashion to the armament. Again they are very limited and have to be used wisely.

Once rebuilding is finished you move onto the **air** phase. This is to determine how to use your air command during the next turn. There are reserve aircraft which can be accessed, but are very limited and have to be used sensibly. There are several options where reserve aircraft can be allocated, some






essential and some tactical.

Essential options are **air power** (the most important), **counter air strikes** and **reconnaissance**. Other options include **interdiction, assault breakers, deep strike** and **iron snake**.

**Counter air strikes** are attacks on enemy airfields and bases which help in the overall battle for air superiority and **Interdiction** is where planes are sent behind enemy lines to attack enemy supply and movement networks. Care has to be taken when using this option since it carries the risk of setting off a retaliatory nuclear strike.

The other three are are respectively an attack on one particular unit (high success rate), a strike into enemy territory and an attack on railways to disable enemy reinforcements.

The most controversial part of the program involves the use of chemical and nuclear weapons. There is an option, **special mission**, which allows the player to set off a strategic chemical or nuclear launch. A **chemical launch** is automatically targeted on an enemy supply city. A special readout gives you the details and expected results as well as telling the results of the attack. This mission carries the risk of an enemy nuclear response.

A **strategic nuclear attack** involves some pretty tense moments the first few times it's used. When you first switch to nuclear mode you are given 30 seconds to ring a phone number and obtain a special authorisation code. This is a real number, 0203 668405, contactable 24 hours a day.

If you enter the correct code number (it's always the same) you are given direct control over all targeting and warheads. There are three separate settings: **Standby**, which you revert to if you decide against a launch (wise move), **Strategic launch**, where a single nuclear strike can be targeted on an enemy city or unit. Be careful when using this since enemy reaction is usually rather severe, and finally **Fire-Plan**, a full-scale strike. This should **never** be used — retaliation is extreme beyond measure.

Targeting a single nuclear or chemical launch is alarmingly simple. You are given control of a cursor which you can position over the desired target. Press fire and the rest is done automatically.

When under enemy nuclear attack, the launch is detected and a target cursor follows the progress of the enemy missile. If you have an option called **reflex system** switched on, your forces will automatically launch a strike of similar size. There is nothing you can do but watch the targets being destroyed in a sequence of graphic screens.

As the game is played, it becomes increasingly obvious that the war cannot be won with nuclear weapons.

This is a brilliant game which offers more than the usual run-of-the-mill war game with its tense action screens and gripping atmosphere. The arcade screens mean that pure arcade players could well become interested, and the simplistic playability means that novice war gamers can get into this with ease. Pure war game fanatics (those of you who play the SSI type of games) might become rather bored due to the rather superficial gameplay and the action screens, but it's well worth buying if you do have an interest in war gaming — and the future.

**Presentation 86%**
**Graphics 83%**
**Complexity 72%**
**Authenticity 94%**
**Lastability 81%**
**Overall 84%**

# TOBRUK — The Preview

Set during the height of the North African campaign in World War Two, this latest game from PSS is intended to simulate the actions of Allied and Axis forces as they struggled to control the town of Tobruk. The game is set at an introductory level but with features such as logistic consideration to interest the more experienced players. As with other PSS offerings, there will be optional arcade elements in an attempt to grab a wider market than might otherwise be available.

This is PSS's fifth wargame and when Gary Mays came down to AMTIX! Towers he expressed how the company felt about wargame design. They are not in the market to produce games that take a month to play. Whatever the advantages of these simulations, Mays feels that they are sometimes over-rated and cetainly not played as much as some people would have you believe. The result, a small range of wargames for players of varying ability but which can be completed by anyone inside a few hours. Note the word 'completed'. Their games can still give you a good run for your money in that time.

*Tobruk* uses the same system employed in *Falklands '82*, admittedly not one of my favourites in the PSS line. But it has a couple of features the previous game lacked. The colourful display shows the area around Tobruk covering several hundred square miles. An information bar across the top of the screen displays the current game phase, date and the name of the unit currently under the cursor. Over the top of the map to the right hand side of the screen is an information window displaying specific information about an individual unit. Units have Infantry, Artillery, AFV, Supply and Mobility factors to make up their strength. When these have been worn down through combat, all but Mobility may be brought back up to strength as long as the unit concerned is within range of the resupply cursor (which represents supply ability to each force. To make things slightly easier, there are two supply cursors for each player.

As hinted in the paragraph above, all play takes place in phases. Movement is followed by combat (between adjacent units only) and the resupply phase appears before the move/fight sequence is repeated for the second time in the turn. At the end of the turn, the player may allocate air power to superiority missions, interdiction or ground strikes from any reserves available. Engineers may be put to AFV recovery or destruction tasks, or they may be allocated to minefield clearance. When any such tasks are set, the locations for the various strikes and missions are selected at the beginning of the next turn.

Here lies one of the main problems facing the Axis player. An extensive minefield has been laid down by the Allied forces and movement through it is very slow indeed. Sappers and air support are required until several breakthroughs can be made. Gary Mays also intimated that on the final version, the Allied player may have the option to lay the minefield at the start of the game. Apart from the minefield, there are various towns and other features displayed on the map but, despite this, it remains largely uncluttered.

The game plays very quickly as the application of commands is handled entirely by the joystick and the command complexity is low. Not that this appears to be a bad feature of the game. On the contrary, depending on how neatly the final implementation is carried out, the system could turn into a highly workable strategy game. PSS intend to add optional arcade sequences as is their wont. The sequence for this game will put the player in a tank simulation section with realistic backgrounds depending on the current location of the engagement. However, none of this had been prepared in time for me to see it.

The game may be played with two human participants or as a solitaire simulation. A choice of sides is available to the solo player. The exact nature of any scenario selection or skill level option is uncertain at the time of writing but, based on their other games, I would not be surprised to see a three tier complexity setting. The level of gameplay means that units are sometimes displayed accurately in terms of their locale at the time but often without any internal game consistency. Again, depending on how PSS complete the final version, this may not be a disadvantage but it still may put off the purists waiting for CCS's *Desert Rats*. A full report will be coming your way the minute the completed game is ready.



KNIGHT GAMES
by Dennis Travers
Swordfight 1
Crossbow
Quarterstaff
Ball & Chain
Archery
Pike Staff
Axe Man
Swordfight 2
AMSTRAD 464/664/6128
£8.95 Cassette
£14.95 AMSTRAD 3" DISK
COMING SOON FOR CBM 64/128
A Glorious Feast of Medieval Combat
ENGLISH SOFTWARE™
1 North Parade, Parsonage Gardens, Manchester M60 1BX.
Tel: 061-835 1358
Distributed by U.S. Gold 021-359 8881




It's Questionnaire time folks! This will be an annual AMTIX! event in which we ask you for your opinions on the magazine. The answers you give us to the questions asked will prove enormously useful in keeping **AMTIX!** the way you like it. Apart from some fairly obvious questions about **AMTIX!**, we've asked YOU a few more questions. If you don't mind answering them, then your responses would be very helpful to us in getting to know you better. But if you'd rather keep a few secrets, we won't be offended!

It's vital that as many readers as possible return their AMTIXIONNAIRE forms — if you don't want to lop the page out of your copy of the magazine, a photocopy will do fine, and written answers will be okay too, so long as you copy out the format of the questions too.

To make it even more worth your while, we're going to put all the completed forms in a giant cardboard box and then we'll draw out ten winners. First Prize winner will collect £60 of software of his or her choice, a jog suit, a **AMTIX!** Sweatshirt, a **AMTIX!** hat and a twelve month subscription to the magazine. A good £100 worth of goodies! Four runners up will collect a twelve month subscription, £12 worth of software and a **AMTIX!** T-shirt and hat.

Five more AMTIXIONNAIRE-replying persons will collect their very own T-shirt.

You've got about a month to put your thinking cap on (it could soon be replaced by an **AMTIX!** Cap!): sharpen your biro and fill in your answers. Send the form to **AMTIX! QUESTIONS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB** to arrive by 17th April at the very, very latest. We'll publish the results in the July issue, with luck and a following wind.

Thank you!

**NAME** ..................................

**ADDRESS** ..................................

..................................

..........**POST CODE** ..............

**T Shirt Size (S, M or L)** ..............

# SECTION ONE: ABOUT AMTIX!

1) Since October last year, how many of the last six issues have you bought?

LESS THAN 3 ☐
3—6 ☐

2) On average, how many other people read your copy of AMTIX? ☐☐

3) If you get AMTIX! regularly, how do you buy it?
(Tick one Box)

By subscription ☐
Reserved or delivered by newsagent ☐
Over the counter ☐

4) In order of preference, which other computer titles you buy?

Amstrad User ☐
Amstrad Action ☐
Popular Computing World ☐
Computer and Video Games ☐
Computer Gamer ☐
Popular Computing Weekly ☐
Other (please specify below) ☐

..........................................

5) Do you intend buying another computer in the next six months? (Y or N) ☐

6) Please give marks out of ten for each of the following features in AMTIX!

Adventure ☐☐
Adventure Arcana ☐☐
Advertisements ☐☐
Amtech ☐☐
Amtips ☐☐
Arcade game reviews ☐☐
Competitions ☐☐
Editorial page(s) ☐☐
General articles ☐☐
Lettertech ☐☐
News ☐☐
On The Spot (Letters) ☐☐
Previews ☐☐
Programmer/Company profiles ☐☐
Strategy ☐☐
Top 20 Chart ☐☐

7) List any other features you'd like to see in AMTIX!:

..........................................

..........................................

8) Is the current rating system
Good ☐
Average ☐
Bad ☐
(Tick one)

9) How often do you agree with the ratings?
Always ☐
Quite often ☐
Occasionally ☐
Never ☐
(Tick one)

10) When you buy games, do you decide what to buy after reading the review in AMTIX!

Every time ☐
Quite often ☐
Now and then ☐
Never ☐

11) The AMTIX! reviews.
Please tick the boxes if you think things are okay as they are, or write an M for more, L for less if you'd like changes

Detail ☐
No of screen shots ☐
Amount of reviewers opinion ☐
Length ☐

12) If it was up to you, how would you improve the rating system?

..........................................

..........................................

# SECTION TWO: ABOUT YOU

What model of Amstrad do you own? Delete the inapplicable models below.

464/664/6128/PCW8256

Do you own a (delete inapplicable)
Green screen/Colour Monitor?

If you are a 464 owner, do you have a disk drive?
Yes ☐
No ☐

664/6128/8265 owners — do you own a second disk drive?
Yes ☐
No ☐

A) Are you

Male ☐
Female ☐

B) How old are you? ☐☐

C) Are you following, or have you followed any of these courses of study?

CSE ☐
GCE O Level ☐
GCE A Level ☐
GCSE ☐
Degree/Technical Certificate ☐
School leaving certificate ☐

D) How much pocket money do you spend a week?

Up to £1 ☐
£1—£2 ☐
£2—£5 ☐
£5—£10 ☐
Over £10 ☐
(Tick one)

E) Other than home computing, what hobbies/interests you have?

Model making ☐
Pop music ☐
Play by mail games ☐
Playing sports ☐
Which sports? ....................

..........................................

F) Apart from AMTIX!, what else do you read? Please list titles:

MAGAZINES

..........................................

..........................................

COMICS

..........................................

..........................................

NEWSPAPERS

..........................................

..........................................

G) How often do you listen to commercial radio stations?

All the time ☐
Regularly ☐
Sometimes ☐
Never ☐

Please list the stations you listen to:

..........................................

..........................................

H) Which of the following do you drink regularly?

Coca Cola ☐
Pepsi Cola ☐
7 Up ☐
Quattro ☐
55 ☐
Cariba ☐
Other ☐
Please list ....................

I) Do you holiday abroad?

Rarely ☐
Once a year ☐
Twice a year ☐
More often ☐




# AM-TIPS from Robin Candy

**This month's tips may have the odd slurred comment here and there. I'm afraid they're due to more than one late night caused by having the job of Software Editor thrust upon my unsuspecting shoulders! I thought it would entail more money (more work equals more money, sort of logical really). So I accepted not knowing what hell I had let myself in for. Thus, many hours, days and weeks later here I am writing the Amtips intro (sans money, sans sanity) at some absurd hour of the night not knowing what to write. So there you have the sob story of the month (cue violins).**

**Unfortunately, due to the pressures of time and space (the usual continuum in fact), you'll have to wait until next month for the rest of the solution to ZORRO and some pokes from Liddon's friend (!). As to the KNIGHTLORE pokes referred to in this month's On The Spot — all the numbers are in hex so just convert them to decimal to get the routine working.**

## HERBERT'S DUMMY RUN

**It seems to be a bit of a Wally column this month with the solution to** *Everyone's a Wally*, **part of** *Three Weeks in Paradise* **and now the entire solution to** *Herbert's Dummy Run*. **Oh you are a lot of pampered readers!**

**1)** First of all get the box key and get the honey pot.
**2)** Now go to the room where the game starts and jump up on to the box. This will spring you up to where you can exchange the honey pot for the teddy.
**3)** Get the rope. Now with the rope and the teddy go to the arcade room with the daleks in it.
**4)** The teddy will go and open the right hand side door; you can now go through this. Jump at the rope in the next room and it should extend into a room with a rubber duck; collect this.
**5)** Load the pop gun (with the cork) and go to the castle.
**6)** Exchange the pop gun for the flag and with the rubber duck go to the seaside screen. You can now collect the pebbles to load the catapult.
**7)** Now get the torch and the bulb; this will mend the torch.
**8)** Go to the dark room with the bulb and this will enable you to see. Shoot all the ducks and a couple of rolls of caps should be dropped. Put these somewhere convenient.
**8)** Get the A brick and the chocolate 10p and go to the screen with the till.
**11)** Climb on top of the brick and walk past the till with the chocolate 10p, this should now be exchanged for a real 10p.
**12)** Take the 10p and the bomb and then go to the room with the 10p slot on the door and jump at it. You will now be in a Blitz game, and when this is completed you will receive a cannonball.
**13)** With this and the rolls of caps go to the room with the cannon and walk through it. The cannonball will be launched and a hole in the wall will be made.
**14)** Pass through this hole and get the space hopper.
**15)** Then go back up to get the tennis racket, put the space hopper in a convenient place.
**16)** Next go into the Breakout room and complete the game. Once the Breakout game is completed you should receive a glove.
**17)** Get the space hopper and with the glove go to Level 1 where there is a room with a hand guarding a door. You must now jump into the room behind the hand (the hand will no longer harm you because you have the glove).
**18)** You will be in a room with Wally and Wilma at the top of an escalator. As you have the space hopper you will be able to jump very high. This means that you can now jump up and switch the escalator on and be reunited with Wally and Wilma to complete the game.

## WYRMWOOD

With four of the Crowns destroyed you are ready for the final showdown with Morag so proceed to Wyrmwood the realm of the shapeshifter. This area is inhabited by any evil creature that Morag has summoned to her cause.

Search all the woods, pools leaves etc with the **Servant spell** to get spells and **Elf Gems**. Find the elves and give the Gems to them and you will get a **Torch**, key and **Missile spell** in return. Use the key to open the chest and get the **Detect spell** . **Light the Torch** on the goblin fire and use it to kill the snakes. Beware of the **Flying Cube** that transports you back to the stone circle. You must decoy it otherwise it will be waiting for you. Use the goblin's key to open the chest to get a **Bow** and a doorkey. Give the Bow to the last elf. Open the locked door with the door key (beware of the cube and remember to kill the snake). Kill at least one of the goblins inside the citadel to persuade the elves to follow you. Lead the elves into the goblins to preserve your missiles, the elves will kill the goblins for you. Unlock the next locked door with the door key and lead the elves through but beware of the magic balls. Unlock the next door with the same key, kill the bat, avoid the magic ball and unlock the door on the left. Two of the rooms on the citadel have invisible goblins guarding chests use the detect spell to show them. The elves still can't see the goblins so you will have to lead them together to destroy them. Take the key and open both of the chests. Take the **Pentagram Symbol** and the **Undo spell** from inside the chests. In a room there is a **Pentagram Symbol** on the floor — place your symbol on top of it to reveal a **Decoy Cube** that takes you outside the citadel. Leave the Symbol and key here.

**Next month will see the final installment in the Dragontorc solution so hang on in there if you're still having any problems.**

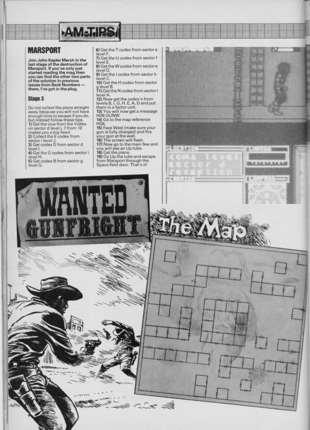
## MARSPORT

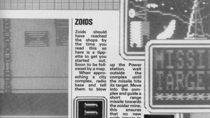
**Join John Kepler Marsh in the last stage of the destruction of Marsport. If you've only just started reading the mag then you can find the other two parts of the solution in previous issues from Back Numbers — there, I've got in the plug.**

### Stage 3

Do not collect the plans straight away because you will not have enough time to escape if you do, but instead follow these tips.

**1)** Get the clue from the Vidtex on sector d level j, *7 from 10 makes you a big head.*
**2)** Collect the E codex from sector i level J.
**3)** Get codex D from sector d level I.
**4)** Get the G codex from sector i level H.
**5)** Get codex B from sector g level G.
**6)** Get the T codex from sector e level F.
**7)** Get the U codex from sector f level E.
**8)** Get the W codex from sector e level D.
**9)** Get the I codex from sector h level C.
**10)** Get the H codex from sector g level B.
**11)** Get the N codex from sector l level A.
**12)** Now get the codex's from levels B, I, G, H, E, A, D and put them in a factor unit.
**13)** You will now get a message HD6 GUNW.
**14)** Go to the map reference HD6.
**15)** Face West (make sure your gun is fully charged) and fire your gun at the wall.
**16)** The screen will flash.
**17)** Now go to the main few and you will see an Up tube.
**18)** Get the plans.
**19)** Go Up the tube and escape from Marsport through the Space field door. That's it!

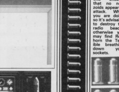


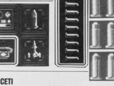



## ZOIDS

Zoids should have reached the shops by the time you read this so here is a tippette to get you started out. Soon to be followed by a map.

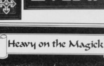
When approaching a city complex, radio base and tell them to blow up the Power station, wait outside the complex until the missile hits its target. Move into the complex and guide a short range missile towards the zoidar mine, this ensures that no new zoids appear to attack. While you are doing so it's advisable to destroy the radio beacon otherwise you may find Redhorn the Terrible breathing down your sockets.












## TAU CETI

**Seen the review yet? If not read it now!** ***Tau Ceti*** **is not a game to be missed but I found it a bit difficult to get into. Luckily,** Mark Blackett **of Cleveland has sneaked in these tips just before the deadline. Of course I would still appreciate more info.**

1) It is very important to know the defence level of a city. If it is high then take your time attacking it, destroying one enemy one at a time.
2) Beginners should try and avoid cities with a high defence level.
3) Use your notepad to write down where you have been and which reactors you have visited.
4) There is an experimental missile at KZINTI which can destroy anything. On entering KZINTI you will see a lot of enemies in front of you. In order to avoid a speedy death accelerate away from them at top speed and use your rear view to pick off any robots that persue you. The missile is at the supply centre and is best saved for use at RUBIVA.
5) At PREEMA there is a reserve shield which is very useful if you get into a spot of bother.
6) When placing the cooling rods in the reactor be as quick as possible because the radiation level reaches critical very quickly.
7) Ordinary missiles can't be used against robots in high defence level cities nor against fortresses.
8) Infra red is very useful to determine what building is ahead, even in day time.

# Three Wee
# in Paradise
## the map

It took quite a lot of grovelling to get you this beautifully techno-coloured map but I thought it would be a Jolly Decent Thing To Do if I published some tips with it as well. So drool over the map and start solving the adventure. This month I've published the tips which are needed to rescue Wilma

First of all get the Mint from the sign outside the Trading Post then get Wilma's Handbag from the beach. To get to the beach go through the picture in the room that contains the table. As long as you have the Handbag in your possession the crocodile will not harm you. Go to the screen with the Ice Cube in it and press the Action key. Now pick up the Hole and go right until you are just past the crocodile, now drop the Handbag. Take the Gold Fish Bowl and the Hole to the Wishing Well screen, stand at the far left of the screen and press the Action key. Go left into the new screen and take the Skeleton key, the spider will not move as long as you have the Bowl.

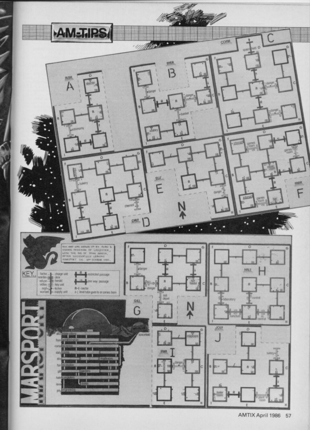
Go through the picture again and into the sea, pass over the locker and the door will open. Take the Spinach and drop it in a convenient place. Go back to the room with the picture in it and get the stuffing from underneath the table, go to the room with the big bird in it. Take the Egg but don't drop the stuffing while you are in the same room as the big bird. With the Egg and the Spinach proceed to the room that contains the sign 'Geyser', now pull the rope and run to the water. Jump up the geyser. Jump into the nest and swap the Spinach for the Bow and Arrows. Now go down and drop the Egg. Go to the screen that contains Wilma and shoot the native with the Bow and Arrows.

Proceed to the screen with the well in it and jump down. Go to the centre of the well and press the Action key. Take the bottle and climb out of the screen by going to the right of the screen and keeping the Action key depressed. With the Bottle and the Corkscrew return to the crocodile screen. Get the Bottle and the Corkscrew past the crocodile one at a time by using the Handbag. Standing over the Coconut with both of the objects press the Action key. Take the Bottle of Oil and the Blunt Axe to the screen with the hut and the car. Pass over the front wheel of the key and press the Action key. With the Sharp axe return to the screen with Wilma and cut her down by pressing the Action key.

That's it.


Jungle
Jungle
Train Pass
eks
se


MOVIE
imagine
the name of the game
3D GANGSTERS "HIT" YOUR SCREEN
SPECTRUM 48K
£7·95
SPECTRUM 48K
Interactive 'bubble' speech adds to the drama of this true life detective movie
Don't miss this picture - it speaks for itself!
AMSTRAD
£8·95
AMSTRAD
Imagine Software is available from: WHSMITH, John Menzies, WOOLWORTH, LASKYS, Rumbelows, Greens, Spectrum Shops and all good dealers.


ALBA
A
BYER
B
CORM
C
DALY
D
ELLI
E
FARR
F
GILL
G
HALE
H
IAXA
I
JOLY
J
N
THIS MAP WAS DRAWN UP BY ALAN & STEVEN FREEMAN OF LEICESTER, WITH THE AID OF JOHN MARSH, AFTER SUCCESSFULLY LEAVING MARSPORT ON 18th OCTOBER 1985.
KEY.
factor
warden
refuse
vidtex
sept
warlord
charge unit
door
herald
key unit
locker
supply unit
restricted passage
one way passage
A-I - sector
a-j level tube goes to or comes from
MARSPORT
alba observatory
byer administration
corm reception
daly stores
elis readiness
farr recreation
gill gardens
hale computers
iaxa stores
joly engineering
spacefield
danger
bakery
chemist
games room
laboratory
control
soft depot
spacefield

## DRAGONTORC

### CURSED CRYPT

The Cursed Crypt is the last place you have to go to collect a Crown in order to destroy it. To get to the Cursed Crypt go first to Torhenge. The woods are uninhabited but a goblin patrol has found a chest there. Use the **Mantle spell** to protect yourself from the Demon's spells.

Find the **Rabbit** and place him down the hole to get the key. Now find the chest which you should unlock using the key you just obtained. Take the **Ankh Symbol** from the chest and go back and get the Rabbit. Find the single hole and place the Rabbit down it, avoiding the snake. Take the spell from the hole. Now take the Rabbit to the **Carrots** to reveal the flagstone. Use the **Ankh** to move it. Go down the hole with the **Cursed Key** and the **Ankh Symbol**. The Torch is useful.

The underground is inhabited by wraiths that can be destroyed using the **Bane spell**. In the room containing on the wall the **Ankh Symbol**, place your Ankh Symbol on the wall to stop the Skelebones appearing. The symbol changes and falls to the floor, take it. Do the same process of matching symbols in another room to stop the Skelebones appearing. This also makes a **Crown Symbol**, take this. Match the Crown Symbol with the Crown Symbol on the wall to reveal the exit.

The **Cursed Key** opens many of the locked doors in the Cursed Crypt. Beware of the invisible snakes that become visible when they touch you, use the **Heal spell** if they bite or **Mantle** to protect yourself from them. Take the small blue key and open the blue chests to get a spell and a doorkey. Using the doorkey open the locked door that leads to a room with 3 wraiths in it. Use **Bane** to kill the wraiths and use the doorkey to open the door at the other end of the room. Keep the **Bane spell** on and search the tombs for spells. Search the tombs with the **Crown Symbol** to get the Crown but avoid the Crown that drops. Take the Crown to the Anvil and destroy it. Now place the **Crystal of anti-thought** on top of the **Magic** to get the message *Now crystal can tame 5 legged Morag's Bane*. Take the **Crystal** to the Cursed Crypt and tame the **Hand** with it (just touch the Hand with the Crystal of anti-thought). Leave the **Gem** behind and take the Hand.

## SWEEVO'S WORLD

**Gargoyle's hit *Sweevo's World* has attracted these tips from** Andrew Dadley **of Kingston near Lewes. So now you know how to wreak havoc on the Tyrant's planet.**

To kill the horrible little girl first find a teddy bear. Then enter the room containing her and climb up some blocks so that you are safely above her. Once that has been done just drop the teddy on her head as she passes. To kill the dictator follow the same procedure but this time use a boot. To kill a Wijur just hound it into the rising finger. To kill a goose just get a weight to drop on its head but before that collect a BOO and walk up behind it. Then say BOO to a goose (groan).

## EVERYONE'S A WALLY

**It's been so long since I published the original Wally tips so here they are in an easy to follow format along with the rest of the solution. Have fun!.**

**To mend the fountain get the Monkey Nuts from the Bakers using Wilma. You can now enter the Zoo, take the Monkey Wrench from the Zoo and drop it somewhere convenient. Now find Dick the plumber and go find the Plunger. Get the Monkey Wrench and take Dick to the fountain (making sure that he has got both the Wrench and the Plunger). Jump up on the fountain and jump at the statue on top, this should mend it. Once the fountain has been mended then get Wally, the empty bucket and the sand. Take Wally to the fountain and the bucket should fill up. Once this is done take Wally to the cement mixer and pick up the Cement, find the Trowel. With the Trowel and Cement go to the location with the bricks in it, walk passed them and the wall should be built.**

### To get the letter B

**1)** Change to Wilma and get book 1 and book 2.
**2)** Change book 1 at library at the first table for the Jump Leads and change book 2 at the library for the Bunsen Burner.
**3)** Now get book 3 and change it at the library for the letter B.

### To get the letter K

**1)** Change to Wilma and get the Monkey Nuts from the Bakers.
**2)** Now enter the Zoo with the Monkey Nuts and get the Monkey Wrench. Drop this somewhere convenient.
**3)** Change to Dick and go and find the Plunger. Collect the Monkey Wrench.
**4)** With Dick mend the fountain by jumping at the statue on top of it, you must have the Monkey Wrench and the Plunger.
**5)** Change to Wally. Now go and get the Empty Bucket and the Sand.
**6)** Fill the Bucket at the fountain then go and pick up the Cement from the screen that contains the cement mixer.
**7)** Take the Trowel and the Cement to the screen with the bricks in it and walk past them. The wall will now be built.
**8)** Now change to Harry and get the fuse wire and blown fuse, this should rewire the fuse.
**9)** Get the good Insulator, get the Screwdriver and go to one of the telephone boxes. Enter this and play the asteroids game until you here the bleep sound. Once you have heard this go to the screen with the pylon in it. You can now mend the pylon because all the bolts of lightning move around the entire screen (mend the pylon by swapping the Good Insulator for the bad one).
**10)** Change to Tom and go and get the Flat Battery from the fork lift truck. Drop the Flat Battery somewhere convenient.
**11)** Change to Harry get the Flat Battery and with the Jump Leads go to the Bee Pee station.
**12)** Once you are here recharge the Flat Battery on the green battery in there, drop the now recharged battery somewhere where you will be able to retrieve it later.
**13)** Change back to Tom get the Battery and put it back in the truck. Change to Wally and get on the truck, then climb onto the wall to get the letter K.

### To get the letter A

**1)** Change to Tom and get the Oil Can. Take this to the trolley in the supermarket and oil it.
**2)** Now change to Harry, jump on the trolley and then onto counter to collect the letter A.

### To get the letter E

**1)** To mend the hook you have to be Wally, get the Super Glue and the Broken Hook and take them to the workshed.
**2)** Put the Hook on top of the bench and walk under the Vice with the Super Glue then, take the Hook which should now say 'hook working'.
**3)** Take the Hook to the crane.
**4)** Now change to Wilma and get the Parcel and Stamp, go to the post office and walk to the far end of this screen to stamp the parcel. You can now go and exchange the Stamped Parcel for the letter E.

### To get the letter R

**1)** Wear the Gas Mask and go behind the shark, in the sewer, and into the cave.
**2)** Go to the far end of the screen and collect the letter R.

### To mend the gas pipe and complete the game

You must be Dick and have the Gas Mask. Go to the cave and collect the Leaking Gas Pipe (beware of the shark thingy). When you are out of the cave, go and find the Chewing Gum, put the the Pipe on top of the bench in the work shed and go and find the Patch. Take the Patch and the Chewing Gum and walk under the bench with the leaking pipe on it. Collect the now Repaired Pipe. Get the Gasmask and take the Pipe back to the cave. This gets rid of the sparkles in the cave and the flame from the motorway.

Now that you have all the letters of the code.take them to the bank in the correct order to spell the word **BREAK**. Each person in the game should take their own letter. B should be taken by Wilma, R by Tom, E by Dick, A by Harry and K by Wally to get the final graphic display.

**The sands of time have just run out (a good phrase I nicked from Gary Penn of ZZAP! 64 fame) so I must draw the column to a close. (Cue violins to fade). Partings are always such sad affairs so without further ado and to avoid more upset here is the address to send in all your tips, maps, and general bits a bobs:**
**AMTIPS, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.**

The major problem with being a humble competitions minion is that as soon as you've opened all the envelopes and spent days sifting through the piles (a dangerous job this), and finally cleared the enormous amount of litter from the broom cupboard by sending mail order on a paper chase, another deluge of correspondence arrives. There's barely enough time to grab a quick cup of tea here so while you reverr so lucky people wade through the winners' list from issue 3, I'm going to introduce Uncle Malcolm to the art of making a really fresh cuppa.

## ENDURANCE COMPETITION

Residents in William Bentley Court, Wolverhampton had better buy themselves earplugs for neighbour, **Barry Davies** has won a luverly Toshiba portable radio cassette player complete with detachable speakers and an on board graphic equaliser. His name was the first out of the crash helmet in our **CRL** Endurance competition. The following runners-up each receive a copy of **CRL**'s wonderful *ENDURANCE* game.

Eric Wilson, Cambridgeshire CB6 2TG; David Barker, Cardiff CF2 7NQ; Gordon Ross, Oxford OX9 6RU; B Eames, Gloucester GL2 6RT; P Richardson, Troon, Ayrshire; Jeffrey Wong, Cheshire M33 3QP; Nathan Byers, Devon TA1 41S; T Summerfield, Warwickshire CV12 6HS; Richard Couchman, Cambs PE17 4XT; Mr A R Jeynes, Worcs B98 9AE; Nigel Impey, Northants NN9 8JB; T Murphy, Merseyside WA12 9EN; Miss Kerry Stilton, Northants NN10 9XA; Nick White, Devon PL46 NW; Nigel Hardy, London SW7 1LU; PM Brocden, Berks RG13 4XD; Anthony Brady, Kent ME10 1TT; Lee R Ppm, Pontefract, W Yorkshire; J Bell, Cornwall TR27 5DX; AJ Morison, Edinburgh EH4 8BE; Keith Wolstenholme, Manchester M3 2NH; Steve Mitchell, Hants RG21 3EH; MR Parashchak, Lancs OL15 8QR; JD Allen, Surrey CR2 OQP; RA Gregory, Midlothian EH22 5QE.

## CAMEL COMPETITION

One or two people seemed to get the hump over our competition to write the best caption to accompany a photograph of programmer, Steve Cargill, he of *FIGHTING WARRIOR* fame. If you remember Steve was sat on top of a bactrian camel (that's one with two humps I think) and looked suitably warlike. After much sand shuffling a winner was found and as a result **Melbourne House** will soon be winging a full set of their software to **Lee Robinson** from S Humberside DN35 0HT. The following runners up will each receive a copy of *Fighting Warrior*.

Eric Campbell, Merseyside L60 5RU; Stephen Williams, Beds LU3 2NP; Philip Cunliffe, Lancs BL3 4PW; Andrew Hodson, Lancs BB9 5EJ; Graeme Taylor, Glasgow G79 2HR; Tony Preece, Brighton BN2 1QB; Ceri Llewellyn, Gwynedd LL38 2PJ; George Davenport, Glasgow G74 3HH; David Smithers, Middlesex HA1 2NE; G Johnson, Merseyside WA10 4JH; Guy Hopkins, Merseyside L37 1NX; A Riley, Surrey KT8 9LD; KJ Sandell, Cornwall PL11 2JN; Joseph Talisb, Birmingham B21 0AR; D Ratcliffe, Surrey KT5 9BX; EJ McCran, Wiltshire SN14 6HB; B Dodds, Birmingham B20 2AB; Mark Davies, W Midlands DY6 8LW; Steve Williamson, Derbyshire S18 6SB; SD Dunlop, Cambridge CB2 5RJ; Trevor Howell, Cheshire WA7 2XG; James Littlemore, Kent CT21 5XW; MJ Lyons BA, Manchester M20 8HS; Jeremy Dixon, Worcester WR4 9JD; Sam Ward, Essex CM8 1DF; Tony Wallis, Yorkshire S6 5DX; Stephen Penn, Kent CT12 6UQ; Tim Gregory, Essex SS8 0DQ; G Graham, Cardiff CF4 2AB; David Reid, Edinburgh EH1 4QT; Robert Crossley, W Yorkshire WF16 0ED; Adrian Smethurst, Lancs BB3 2TU; AW Bramley, Cheshire SK9 3PZ; Xenis Stylianou, London N9 9EE; Justin Shackleston, Staffords ST4 6QN; A Mustard, N Ireland BT19 2AY; Yomi Atinosho, London W2 5UU; Paul Smith, W Yorkshire HD7 6AP; JT Roberts, Hereford HR1 3PA; Andrew Rahaman, Surrey SM4 4SW; Anthony Orme, Manchester M10 8QF; Paul Sims, Muir ST3 5NP; Charles Wood, Surrey GU17 8BS; Paul Buskell, E Sussex BN9 9NR; Eric Wilson, Cambridgeshire CB6 2TG; SJ Dunphy, W Sussex BN15 8HN; Andrew Coote, W Yorkshire 118 5EY; Stephen Creegan, Bury Lancs; Carsten Poulsen, 15a 9000 AAL BOR 6, Denmark; Leon Orr, Belfast BT7 2HJ.

## MODEMS COMPETITION

This competition drove me cross-eyed as I strove to find the subtle differences in the two pictures of Santa delivering Christmas presents to some lucky children. Whatever happened to Christmas? After much debate it was decided to award the 10 mega prizes of a **GEC Modem**, **Honeysoft Interface**, and one year subscription to **Micronet** to the following lucky readers.

R Ormson, Lancs BL8 2HW; Patrick Gould, Lincs PE22 OPJ; Tom Lynch, London SE1 7RB; BM McKenna, Dublin 2; Ernest Nelson, Belfast BT6 9BA; Ian Mulhall, Tyne & Wear NE10 OTE; Colin Grant, Oxon OX8 3QH; Alan Herbert, Shropshire SY12 OBS; D Sheppard, Hants PO14 3AD; GA Coombos, London N17 OTZ.

## BIG DADDY COMPETITION

If you missed out on winning the complete set of software games from **Melbourne House** in the Camel competition you had the opportunity to redeem this wrong in their *Rock 'n' Wrestle* competition. If you recall the wonderful Paula Byrne found herself in an a headlock courtesy of Shirley Crabtree better known to millions of wrestling fans as Big Daddy. What you had to do was write a suitable caption which highlighted Paula's delight, oops, I mean agony!! The lucky winner was **GJ Bostock** from Manchester M21 1HN.
The following people each receive a copy of *Big Daddy's Rock 'n' Wrestle*.

Gerry Hughes' Surrey GU6 7JU; Drew Baxter' Newbiggin-By-Sea NE64 6BW; M Rebak' Middlesex HA3 OSE; Chris Stevens' Suffolk 1P31 3PB; T Hope' Co Durham DH2 2TS; Tony Preece' Brighton BN2 1QB; John Burd' Shropshire TF1 4XW; Andrew Holland' Nottingham NG 210 EW; Steven M White' Birmingham B30 1AF; Shawn John' London E13 9BT; George Davenport' Glasgow G74 3HH; Lee Robinson' S Humberside DN35 OHT; Neil Brown' Co Antrim BT27 4JJ; Maurice Bowness' Lancs L31 9RS; Sean Rowe' W Sussex BN12 4AU; David Catterall' Hants SP10 4EL; Matthew Conway ' Berks RG16 7PW; MP Gallagher' Hereford HR12 3T; J Swatton' Swindon SN4 9AG; Rajpal Singh' Glasgow G51 1LR; John Sholicar' Glos GL52 3DA; Ian Mulhall' Gateshead NE10 OTE; Spencer Gorton' Lancs OL12 7BX; Mr G Hassin' Tyne & Wear NE8 2NP; Simon Smith' W Yorkshire WF3 3JE; G D Young' Middlesex HA1 4AX; Paul Smith' W Yorkshire HD7 6AP; Scott Williams' Cambs PE13; David John Weir' Surrey GU26 6TP; Russ Stripp' Lincoln LN1 1PH; Justin Knights' Essex CD2 8TE; Richard Inwood' Mottingham SE9 4JF; Paul Smith' Whitefield M25 6HL; Andrew Rahaman' Surrey SM4 4SW; David Hinderwood' Lancs FY7 6JJ; Ian Harrison' Accrington' Lancs; Karl Dactor' Middlesex HA9 8RE; Andrew Hodson' Lancs BB9 5EJ; A Oyston' Lancaster L41 12A; Christian J Kendqall' Shipley BD18 4RN; T Summerfield' Warwicks CV11 6HS; G Veazey' E Sussex BN9 8TR; AJ Webb' Berks RG12 4YN; Dean McLuckie' Lanarkshire ML42 UQ; Iain Cook' Cleveland TS13 5AX; P Bunting' Derbyshire SK13 8NE; IF Perry' W Midlands B62 9JX; Sye Law' Manchester OL15 8AA; Nigel A Burke' Walsall WS3 4DF; AJ Morison' Edinburgh EH4 8BE.

## NAME THAT SONG COMPETITION

You seem to be well tuned in when it comes to music and also appear to have excellent memories (forgive the pun) when it comes to naming tunes with the word, memory, in the title. The three main winners each receive the choice of two of the following, a **ROM Speech Synthesizer**, **256K Silicon Disk**, and a **Light Pen ROM**. The lucky people are **B Bond**, from Birmingham; **Anthony Brady** of Sittingbourne, Kent and **D Tatum** from Forest Hill, Oxford.

Three other readers have the choice of one of these three super accessories and these are **RE Moulton** who lives in Bourne, Lincs; **D Bailey** from Stafford and **Claire Turner** of Peterborough.

## AGGIE'S MODEM COMPETITION

What a knowledgeable lot you are out there. We had loads of entries for this contest for a £50 **Circuit Holdings Accoustic Modem**, and why not? Sadly only six are available as prizes for this brain testing competition and the lucky winners are:

Corporal S Richardson, RAF Wattisham, Suffolk; P Goode, Worcs WR14 2TY; W Ireland, Lancs PR4 1PN; G Davies, W Midlands WV14 9BP; Julian Cater, London SW14 7LY; Julian Broderick, Cleviand TS24 OPB

## FRIDAY 13TH COMPETITION

This competition must have scared most of our readers too much for few of you entered it. Anyway once I had found the nerve to open the entries it was decided to bestow the honour of a train trip and two nights, all expenses paid, in a suitably scary hotel in York to **Neil Jones** from Liverpool L23 8VE and **IT Mathie** from Bedfordshire LU5 5PL. The following each receive a *Friday the 13th* sweatshirt to scare your family and friends.

Ian Bailey, Birkenhead, Merseyside; Martin Sims, Essex CM4 OHZ; DW McMorrine, Manchester M35 OPS; SJ Lee, Cambs PE18 9QD; KBTrimby, Reading RG2 7EH; Heath McStay, Lanarkshire ML8 5BA; Steve Culshaw, Stretford, Manchester; Nick Wood, Berks RG13 4XN; DA Finlayson, Hants SO1 8BD; SR Williams, Middlesex TW2 5TU; Simon Wilding, Tadcaster LS24 9LG; Keith Follon, Widnes, Cheshire; WB Gray, Aberdeen AB2 9UX; Jonathan Williams, Surrey SM1 4JH; RF Keeley, RAF Brize Norton, Oxon; Stephen Barnes, Co Antrim BT38 7JR; JP Denton, Herts SG2 9JE; T Knights, Dorset BH15 4HA; Justin Mason, Ise of Wight PO37 7DY; Mark Isaac, S Glamorgan CF6 9XH; R Samo, Cheshire SK14 4TF; Tom Prichard, Essex CM4 9RY; Aaron Badger, Wolverhampton, W Midlands; Simon Bloomer, Manchester M28 5DY; John Wilson, Bridge of Weir PA11 35X; I Allder, Eastborne; A Salter, Solihull B91 2AQ; Michael Toone, Derby DE3 8SA; Philip Knight, Lancs FY8 2RU; RS Patterson, Belfast T6 OED; Anthony Knife, Essex RM6 4PD; P Baldwin, NO 13069, BFPO 30; J Apperley, Chester-Le-St, Co Durham.

## DATAC COMPETITION

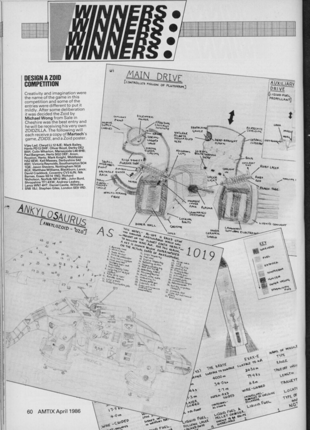
Obviously a lot of people out there would like to own a Panther Datac DX 109 Dot Matrix Printer for the entries for our coded competition flowed in. Unfortunately there is only one winner and the lucky person is **Simon Watson** of Mevagissey, Cornwall. Well done sir!

# WINNERS WINNERS WINNERS WINNERS

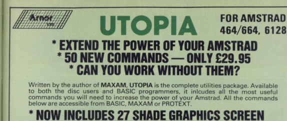
## DESIGN A ZOID COMPETITION

Creativity and imagination were the name of the game in this competition and some of the entries were different to put it mildly. After some deliberation it was decided the Zoid by **Michael Wong** from Sale in Cheshire was the best entry and he will be receiving his very own ZOIDZILLA. The following will each receive a copy of **Martech**'s game, *ZOIDS*, and a Zoid poster.

Vijay Lad, Clwyd LL12 8JE; Mark Bailey, Hants PD13 DHF; Oliver Boyd, Derby DE2 8AH; Colin Wharton, Merseyside L46 6HB; Paul Bargman, Herts SG2 OEF; Anon, Royston, Herts; Mark Knight, Middlesex HA2 6EW; Keil Massey, Derbyshire S42 6SH; Victoria Reynolds, Southampton SO4 1GB; Jason Stevens, Nottingham NG8 6GX; Matthew Williams, Blackburn, Lancs; David Craddock, Coventry CV3 6JN; Nik Barnes, Essex SS14 1NG; Richard Nicholson, Norfolk NR12 9RL; John Burd, Shropshire TF1 4XW; Andrew Leakey, Lancs WN7 4HT; Daniel Castle, Wiltshire SN8 1BJ; Stephen Giles, London SE9 1RD.




NICK FALDO
PLAYS THE
Open
£9.99
Now available
for the Amstrad
Accurate
900 screen
scrolling map of the
Royal St. George's
Golf Course, venue for the
Open Championship 1985.
Can you make par on this
course of Champions? With strong
winds and deep bunkers you'll need all
the help your caddy can give you. Full
animation and live action bring your game to life.
MIND
GAMES
Argus Press Software Ltd., Liberty House,
222 Regent Street,
London W1R 7DB
Telephone 01-439 0666
Free booklet featuring maps and
history of the course with a hole by h
guide by




# * NOW INCLUDES 27 SHADE GRAPHICS SCREEN DUMP

(For Epson/DMP2000 Printers)

## DISC UTILITIES

Instantly from BASIC you can perform the following:-

| | |
|---|---|
| FORMAT | Format a disc |
| COPY | Copy files (1 or 2 drives) |
| DELETE | Selective file deletion |
| LOAD | Load any file to any address (no setting HIMEM) |
| DUMP) TYPE) LIST) | Any file to screen |

Utopia also contains a very powerful disc editor:-

| | |
|---|---|
| DEDIT | You can display/change any byte of information on any disc. Essential for saving part of a corrupted disc or restoring deleted files. |
| DISCOPY | Copy a disc (1 or 2 drives) |
| ACCESS | Protect/Unprotect Sys/Dir files |
| INFO | Displays load, exec addresses and file length |
| SAVE | Save block of memory as binary or ASCII |

**PLUS MANY OTHER USEFUL COMMANDS**

## PROGRAMMING UTILITIES

Invaluable commands for BASIC or machine code programmers

| | |
|---|---|
| FIND | Find any BASIC keyword or ASCII string |
| REPLACE | As FIND with replace option, Selective or Global |
| VARS | List all variables |
| ARRAYS | List arrays |
| FNS | List functions |
| CALL | Call machine code routine, allowing setting of registers |
| MEDIT | Powerful memory editor |
| MOVE | Move BASIC lines |
| STATUS | Display info on current BASIC program, eg size, HIMEM etc |
| TOKENS | Display function key definitions |
| NOKEYS | Cancel UTOPIA function keys — see below |
| C | Calculate expression |
| MDUMP | List memory (hex/ASCII) |

## PRINTING & FUNCTION KEY COMMANDS

| | |
|---|---|
| GDUMP | Full 27 shade graphics screen dump for DMP2000 and all Epson compatible |
| PRINTON | Echo all screen output to printer |
| CDUMP | Very fast character dump from screen to any printer |
| PRINTOFF | Switch off PRINTON |

UTOPIA also sets up the function keys to contain useful definitions, eg:-

| | |
|---|---|
| CTRL + ENTER | Gives RUN "DISC" if disc drive is fitted |
| CTRL + f0 | Sets colours for 80 column work on colour screens |
| CTRL + f1 | LIST |
| CTRL + f2 | Set to 80 column mode |
| CTRL + f3 | CAT |
| CTRL + f4-f8 | . . . etc |
| CTRL + f9 | Erase backup files |

You will be surprised how much time all these function keys will save!!

## AND FINALLY

Now you are in the world of ROM software, we have included some extra commands to make your ROMs easier to use.

| | |
|---|---|
| HELP | List ROMs showing version number and workspace address |
| HELP,n | List all commands in ROM n |
| HELPR | List all RSX commands |
| ROMOFF | Turn off selected ROMs |
| ROMON | Turn on selected ROMs |
| U | Execute UTOPIA command |
| XROM | Execute command in specified ROM |

(U and XROM get over the problem of command name duplication)

**"A POWERFUL RANGE OF COMMANDS AT A BARGAIN PRICE"** — POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY

**Available from selected branches of Boots WHSMITH and all good computer stockists, or directly**
(Specify machine model)

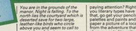
## COMPLETE PRICE LIST

| | CASSETTE | DISC | EPROM | AD2 CARTRIDGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROTEXT | £19.95 | £26.95 | £39.95 | £49.95 |
| PROMERGE + | — | £24.95 | £34.95 | — |
| PROSPELL | — | £24.95 | £34.95 | — |
| MAXAM | £19.95 | £26.95 | £39.95 | £49.95 |
| UTOPIA | — | — | £29.95 | See AMTIX! Magazine |

From: **ARNOR LTD**
**THE STUDIO**
**LEDBURY PLACE**
**CROYDON CR0 1ET**
**01-688 6223**

**24 HOUR CREDIT CARD HOTLINE – ACCESS/VISA**

# THE 'MOVE NORTH, MOVE SOUTH, MOVE WEST, WHAT NOW?' ADVENTURE COMPETITION.




*You are in the grounds of the manor. Night is falling. To the north lies the courtyard which is deserted save for two large, leather-like birds who circle above you and seem to call to you in baneful cries . . . .*

**Right . . . now that should've sparked your imagination, unless of course you're Gary Liddon in which case I'll just pop out for a can of petrol and a hundredweight of firelighters . .**

Anyway, back to the plot. After the poor comps minion sold his sole (comps minions can't afford shoes), the nice man at Incentive has decided to offer a luverly **DMP 2000 Printer** to the person that shows the greatest imagination in both words and pictures. What you have to do is mindbogglingly complicated so listen carefully.

Study the above screen shot(s) drawn with the Incentive *Graphic Adventure Creator* and then in not more than 40 words, write a location description that you think applies to it. Still paying attention? Right, once you literary types have finished that, go get your pencils, palettes and paints and put to paper a picture of a location from the adventure that you've always wanted to write yourself, giving a brief background of the events leading up your location. Okay? Now all of that may be a bit daunting but if you shouldn't win the printer all is not lost. **Ian Andrews** of Incentive has offered 20 runner up prizes of the *Graphic Adventure Creator* so that no one can say that they didn't have a chance of winning something rather useful. That lot should stretch your minds to breaking point, yuk yuk!

Please make sure your entries are no bigger than an A4 sheet (297mm x 210mm) and that your name and address is clearly marked on the entry. If you've got any energy left after all that then put the entire caboodle into an envelope and staple the whole lot to a passing postman and ask hin to take it to: **GISAPRINTER, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB**



## COMPUTER CHALLENGES FOR THE AMSTRAD

**by Richard Hurley and David Virgo, £6.95, Duckworth**

Written by Richard Hurley who is head of computer studies at Hurstpierpoint College in Sussex and one of his members of staff, David Virgo, the book contains 10 programs for the 464, four of which are puzzles and six of them being games.

Unless you are one of these people who wake up with their batteries fully charged and senses fully alert it is advisable not to tackle any of the contents of the book in the morning. Better to leave it until later in the day. Even the authors admit clear thinking and much skill is needed both to solve the puzzles and beat your computer at the games.

The first chapter introduces artificial intelligence and the more advanced features of Locomotive Basic used in the book. Artificial intelligence, of course, is the combination of methods used in programming to make a computer solve, or attempt to solve, a problem by selective reasoning. Several artificial intelligence techniques are used in the book to provide the different puzzles and games which are both entertaining and instructive. As all are programs are written to run on the Amstrad BASIC is used to make the listings easy to follow and comprehend.

It's common knowledge a program consists of a series of lines (that is instructions) which, when used in sequence, give the solution to a problem. This group of instructions is usually known as an algorithm, and the art of solving a problem by means of a computer comes down to finding a suitable algorithm for the task.

However, in the case of one of the games in the book, draughts, the problem is to find the best possible move at any one time and it is not possible to evaluate this exactly. Under these circumstances a heuristic, which can be defined as a rule or set of rules, is employed, and when applied leads the computer user to a solution.




The book also touches on LOCOMOTIVE BASIC, a fast, very versatile and powerful version of BASIC. Like all versions it contains some peculiar commands and additional facilities. The chapter on LOCOMOTIVE BASIC explains file handling, Interrupts, and Graphics, and is most informative.

The bulk of the text is dedicated to the four puzzles and six games. In order the puzzles are the Sliding Puzzle, the Cube, the Crossword Puzzler and the Towers of Hanoi. The games are Othello, Noughts and Crosses, Cribbage, Backgammon, Draughts and Connect Four.

Crossword Puzzler provides an endless supply of crosswords, the cube is a graphical representation of the famous Rubik's Cube and Cribbage will tax your card-playing skills to their utmost.

The final chapter of the book reviews the application of artificial intelligence in the different programmes with detailed notes on the creation of another game, thus offering the readers a chance to write a program of their own choice.

Before typing any of the programs into the Amstrad the authors suggest familiarisation with the operation of Datacorder and its associated commands, ensuring two or more quality cassettes are available for storage. They also recommend two copies of each of the programs are kept on separate tapes at all times in case problems are found during program transfer.

**Malcolm Harding**

## AMSTRAD GAMES BOOK

**by Kevin Bergin and Andrew Lacey, £6.95, Melbourne House**

If you own either a 464 or 664 and are into games in a big way this book is one for the collection.

There are 30 different programs within its covers varying from arcade to simulations, adventure, educational and strategy games. All the reader needs to do to enjoy the wide range of entertainment is to copy the program of his or her choice from the text. The games make the best use of the Amstrad's features, sound and graphics including such advanced features as using interrupts from BASIC.

Each program listing has been designed to help the reader and includes a screen shot so you can see exactly what your program will look like, or should look like! The unique Chexsum program enables the reader to pinpoint immediately any typing errors one may make in entering programs. What's more it is written in such a fashion even the newest Amster can comprehend.

For the more advanced programmers each program contains a comprehensive outline of what the program is doing so that one can modify and extend the games to one's own specifications.

The book should appeal both to the novice and expert and give many hours of entertainment and surprises. All the programs are classified, explained and set out in an easy to read and enter format, with further programming suggestions and enhancements. The book's preface touches on typing errors which are most frequent with the Amstrad such as the confusion between the letter O and the digit 0 and the letter I with the number 1. The programs include *3D Draw*, *3D Maze*, *Spacman*, *UFO*, *Space Wars* and *Tank Ambush*.

**Malcolm Harding**

Taking the boredom out of learning music with the

# MUSIC TEACHER




**The MUSIC TEACHER is a menu driven program for Amstrad computers which offers users a relatively painless introduction to the musical world of lines and spaces and, of course, the theory behind it. It is published by CHILDSPLAY SOFTWARE and costs £11.95 on cassette and £14.95 on disk.**

### INTRODUCTION

If you ever wanted to learn the theory and practice of music or if you are already learning to play an instrument *Music Teacher* has the considerable advantage of making the boring side of music, that is the theory of reading music, a lot more fun. In view of the wealth of music programs around it is probably not a bad idea to find out what those queer-looking blobs and sticks actually mean. As most music programs turn the Amstrad into a piano-type keyboard a program such as this could be a great help.

*Music Teacher* is a menu driven program that offers a painless introduction to the world of lines and spaces, and more important the theory behind it all. The menu starts simply by dealing with the actual names of the notes and their relative position on the lines and spaces. Other options are: compose a tune, a demonstration of music symbols and how they sound, how to cope with sharps and flats, and even how scales are formed.

### VARIOUS LEVELS

Diving straight into the note name section there are various levels of difficulty starting with playing on a few white notes and gradually getting more advanced until you can play all the white notes. The names are on screen to help you and the notes can be entered either by keys 1 to 8 (which correspond to the notes A to G) or by a displayed piano keyboard and a moving cursor.

One thing which was quite useful here was the ability to use a joystick to whiz up and down the keyboard and enter notes quickly. Each game is timed and the resulting score shown for all and sundry to laugh at afterwards. Having gained a little knowledge you can put it to good use by using the composing option. Here you can enter your own tune and have the dubious privilege of hearing it back, although with all the notes being the same length and a pretty pedestrian playback speed being the only one going this was a bit tiresome. Rests appeared here without any previous explanation although to be fair you could have looked at the relevant menu option first.

### DOGMATIC APPROACH

The sharps, flats, and scales sections are really here for the more advanced student. It does take a rather dogmatic approach to the process of teaching in that it presents you with lots of theory on screen. What it does not do however is tell you why you should need to know this theory or how you can apply it in a practical way to your own music. Perhaps a few simple built-in demonstration tunes or even your own self-penned tunes could be transposed on screen (this means it starts on a different note but still plays the same tune).

This would show you what scales and key signatures are about rather than giving you piles of information that uses up valuable memory space. The theory proper can be covered by an accompanying booklet that explains what you have already done on screen.

Generally the program is good and is one that has been covered no better by similar programs. But I do have a feeling that it tends to defeat itself by having theory sections which consists of pages of text but do not actually take an active part in the program. The games could certainly be more imaginative and make more use of graphics and colour but as a help for those of us who are learning the basics whilst also grappling with synthesisers, keyboards and other instruments, it is well worth looking at. There is a special program available for recorder players.

*Music Teacher* is available by post from **John Child, 2 Southview Drive, Uckfield, Sussex TN22 1TA.**

**Jon Bates**

# CP/M PRO

CP/M provides a standard environment for the software to run in, and so gives basically transportable software, there are areas which are far from standardised. The main ones which are likely to give trouble to the CP/M user are the video control codes which are used to control the way data is displayed on the screen and the keyboard layout and facilities available on different hardware. Software manufacturers have overcome these problems by supplying with the main program, another separate 'instal' program. This is run first and is used to set up the main program to suit your particular brand of hardware.

The idea of an operating system such as CP/M is to allow portability of software, this can be an alien concept to someone who has only had a 'one of a kind' type of home micro. Buying software for these machines was simply a question of looking through the list of available software for that machine. The newcomer to CP/M may still be applying the same principle and start asking suppliers for the special version for his machine. Sometimes there are, special, ready set up versions for a particularly popular machine, but usually all that is actually needed is to obtain the program on the correct disk format.

The Amstrad has a number of pre-installed CP/M packages available. These can be useful for the inexperienced user, as he can use his program right away with no installation needed. This may initially be of value, but what happens if he wants to change to a new brand of CP/M hardware? If you have a program with install facilities, all that is required is to get it transferred to the correct format, then instal it to suit the new machine. There are a number of firms who can transfer programs between different disk formats for a few pounds. This all sounds reasonably simple but various problems can arise.

### THE PROBLEMS

Most installation programs display a list of hardware types and ask you to choose one, chances are yours is not on the list. If this



# M: INSTALLING PROGRAMS

**Although CP/M allows you to do a lot more than was possible with the old style 'Home Micros' with no standardised operating systems, it can give new and experienced users alike considerable problems in certain areas.**

is the case many installation programs give you the option to define your own hardware type, this is a very desirable feature but some of the questions you may need to answer will be very difficult for a beginner, often requiring that you have some knowledge of **HEX** and certainly you will need to know what control codes your machine uses.

I hope this has not made you want to go and find a'special' version or something for your machine. The advantages of installable software are considerable. For example I change my CP/M hardware rather frequently and have run my copy of **DBASE II** on at least six different makes of CP/M computer. Unfortunately there has been a tendency lately for software houses to produce special 'doctored' versions of programs which cannot easily be modified to run on any other type of hardware than the machine for which they were intended. I personally would not buy such a program, after all, hardware wears out, software does not. Sometimes packaged software, that is software thrown in with the computer, also comes into this category.

## THE SOLUTION?

What prompted me to write this article on installation is a remarkable and unique little book called 'CP/M Installation Guide for Applications Programs' published by the PD Software Library. This book comes with a disk of sotware tools including a Z80 assembler, and disassembler, a disk editor, improved versions of the CP/M 8080 assembler, a program for re-defining keys, a Z80 debugger and various other utilities. It gives a general 'how to do it' guide for installing CP/M programs. The emphasis is on **Wordstar**, **Dbase II** and **Supercalc** but the principles could equally be applied to other programs.

It covers such things as what to do if your computer is not on the list of terminals, how to instal programs even if you have no instal program and various other topics. It also contains a fair amount of supplemental data about CP/M which is usually left out of the manufacturers manuals. It is not intended for the complete beginner, and assumes the reader to have some experience of using CP/M. I know of one person who had a copy of **Dbase II** which he had bought with an Osborne 01, this was 'bundled' software and no instal program was provided, the Osborne died of old age but with the aid of this book he was able to get his copy of **Dbase II** running on his new 6128. The book, with the software, is priced at £9.00 plus post and packing or £6.50 for PD Sig members but this does not include the media. You have to supply a formatted disk for a copy of the software.

## NOT ALL PROGRAMS NEED INSTALLING

Many CP/M programs do not need to be installed at all and will run just as they are, without modification, on any CP/M machine. Most utility programs come into this category, PIP, STAT & ED as supplied with CP/M are examples. As a general guide any program which attempts to do more with the screen than just allowing it to scroll will probably need to be installed, this includes:- word processors, spreadsheets and any program which uses graphics. Languages, that is interpreters and compilers do not usually need installing unless they include an editor.

## PUBLIC DOMAIN PROGRAMS

Most Public Domain programs have been written to be as portable as possible so installation is usually not such a problem as with commercial software. This is also helped by the fact that public domain programs are often supplied with the source code, that is the programming steps used in the program, so you can modify them to suit your own needs. Programs written in basic can often be easily installed to run on other machines. Usually this will be just a question of finding statements such as — PRINT CHR$ (26). Statements like this are used to send control characters to the screen, in this case a 'Control Z' which is used on many computers to clear the screen. On the 6128 this would have to be changed to-**PRINT CHR$ (27) and CHR$ (69)** which is Escape 'E'.

This of course assumes that the syntax of the basics used is similar. One area where versions of basic do not seem to have much compatibility is the method used to store programs. Many basics have the option to save a program in an internal tokenised format or as a **ASCII** file. A program saved in the tokenised format of one version of basic will most likely be impossible to load under some other version. The safest thing to do if you are transferring basic programs is to always use the **ASCII** format. This does use a little more disk space but it does mean you will be able to load and edit the program if needed.

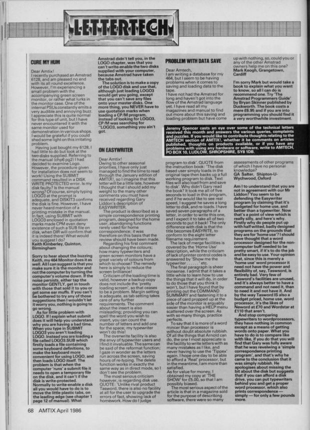
## COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS

Communications programs always have to be set up for the particular brand of hardware they are to run on. This is because they need to directly access the communications facilities in the machine. Communications programs are not usually installed like a wordprocessor or spreadsheet program. It is usually necessary to obtain the program in assembler source code, edit the source code, and then assemble it using ASM.COM or a Z80 assembler. This can be a tricky process as sometimes special routines will need to be written to provide any codes needed by the communications chips used. Fortunately if you have a popular machine such as an Amstrad many ready to run communications programs are available from the public domain.

Modem 7 is one of the most popular communications programs, ready installed versions of this and a more sophisticated communication program called MEX are available for the Amstrad on **CPMBBUK** volume 33. Bulletin board software has this same installation difficulty. I have been asked a few times 'Is there some bulletin board software which will run on the Amstrad', as yet I have not come across any ready set up for the Amstrad. The standard Amstrad is really not very suitable for bulletin board use because of the limited amount of disk storage available. Bulletin board programs tend to be rather large, probably most of them with their associated help files, etc, would be too large to fit onto an Amstrad disk. I would guess that 1 megabyte of storage would be about the minimum needed for all but the most rudimentary systems.

If you would like to see some BBS software, the popular RBBS Public Domain system is available on SIGM volumes 249 and 250 and a system called **ROS** written in Turbo Pascal is on volume 251. All of the public domain volumes mentioned are available from the Public Domain software library for a copying fee of £2.00 per volume plus P&P (you have to supply the disk). A synopsis catalogue of the 600 or so CP/M volumes available can be obtained by sending a self addressed stamped envelope, plus two unaffixed 13p stamps, to **The Public Domain Software Library, 138 Holtye Road, East Grinstead, Sussex RH19 3EA**. Or if you have a modem and commumnication you can download it from their bulletin board (300/300) on **0340-315636**.

**Roy Jones**



# LETTERTECH

## CURE MY HUM

Dear Amtix!
I recently purchased an Amstrad 6128, and am pleased no end with its all round excellence. However, I'm experiencing a small problem with the accompanying green screen monitor, or rather what lurks in the monitor case. One of the internal PSUs constantly emits a very audible and annoying buzz. I appreciate this is quite normal for this type of unit, but I have never encountered it with the same monitor used for demonstration in various shops. I would be grateful if you could shed some light on this irritating problem.

Having just bought my 6128, I had little to do but look at the two disks supplied. Referring to the manual (chp6 pg2) I had decided to examine Logo. However, the procedure given for installation does not seem to work! Using the SUBMIT command resulted in a DISK WRITE PROTECTED error. Is my disk faulty? Is the manual wrong? Of course, simply typing LOGO3 at the prompt is adequate, and DISKIT3 confirms the disk is fine. However, I have never heard mention of a printing mistake in the manual. In fact, using SUBMIT with LOGO3 enclosed in quotation marks made CPM even deny existence of such a SUB file on disk, when DIR will confirm that it is indeed there! What would you suggest I do?
**Keith Kimberley, Quinton, Birmingham**

**Sorry to hear about the buzzing Keith, my 464 Monitor does it as well. All I can suggest is that you make sure it is the monitor and not the computer by turning the computer's volume down. If the noise persists, either tap the monitor GENTLY, get in touch with those that sold it to you or get some ear muffs. If you can't be bothered to try any of those suggestions then I wouldn't let it worry you, nothing is going to go wrong.**

**As for little problem with LOGO. If I explain what submit does it will help you understand why you are having a bad time. When you type in SUBMIT LOGO3 you aren't loading LOGO. Instead you are loading a file called LOGO3.SUB which firstly loads a file containing some keyboard definitions, to make the keyboard more convenient for using LOGO, and then loads LOGO itself. The problem is that when the computer 'runs' a submit file it needs to open a temporary file on the disk, and it can't if the disk is write-protected. Normally to write-enable a disk all you would have to do is to move the little plastic tabs, on the leading edge (see chapter 1 page 12 of manual). What Amstrad didn't tell you, in the LOGO chapter, was that you can't write-enable the two disks supplied with your computer, because Amstrad have taken the tabs out.**

**The solution is to make a copy of the LOGO disk and use that, although just loading LOGO3 would get you going, except that you can't save any files onto your master disks. One more thing, you NEVER have to use quotation marks when loading a CP/M program, instead of looking for LOGO3, CP/M was searching for "LOGO3, something you ain't got.**

## ON EASYWRITER

Dear Amtix!
Owing to other seasonal priorities, I have only just managed to find the time to read through the January edition of AMTIX!, so I imagine that this letter will be a little late, however I thought that I should add my weight to the many other comments you must have received regarding Gary Liddon's description of EASYWRITER.

The product is described as a simple correspondence printing program, designed for the home user, abandoning functions rarely used for home correspondence; it was therefore on this basis that the review should have been made.

Regarding his first comment about changing the colours; how many typewriters and green screen monitors have a great variety of colours from which to choose? The remedy here is simply to reduce the screen brilliance!

Criticism of the loading time is valid, however a backup copy does not include the 'pretty loading screen', so that ceases to be a problem. Margin setting is adequate, as tab setting takes care of any further requirements. The comment about the insert is also misleading; providing you can spell the word you wish to insert, you can count the number of letters and add one for the space; my typewriter won't do this!

The overwrite facility is also the envy of typewriter users and I find it invaluable. The same can be said of the reformat function; I gaze in wonder as the letters run across the screen, saving hours of re-typing. The delete function works in exactly the same way as in direct mode, so I don't see the problem.

The most serious criticism however, is regarding disk use. QUOTE: 'Unlike rival product Tasword, there is also no facility at all for the user to upgrade the errors of fact, showing lack of homework. How do I judge

## PROBLEM WITH DATA SAVE

Dear Amtech,
I am writing a database for my 464, but I seem to be having problems when it comes to saving and loading data to the tape.
I have not had the Amstrad for long and haven't got into the flow of the Amstrad language yet. I have read all my magazines and manual to find out more about this saving and loading problem but have come up with nothing, so, could you or any of the other Amstrad owners help me on this one?
**Mark Keogh, Grangetown, Cardiff**

**I'm sorry Mark but would take a book to explain what you want to know, so all I can do is recommend one. Try 'The Amstrad Programmers Guide' by Bryan Skinner published by Duckworth. The book costs a mere £6.95 and if you are into programming you should find it a very worthwhile investment.**

**Jeremy Spencer casts an eye over some of the technical letters received this month and answers the various queries, complaints and puzzles. If you would like to contribute thoughts relating to the AMTECH section of AMTIX!, whether it be comments on articles published, thoughts on products available, or if you have any problems with using any hardware or software, write to AMTECH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.**

program to disk'. QUOTE from the instruction book: 'The disk based user simply loads in the original tape then backs up a full working program to disk. Text files will also load from and save to disk'. Why didn't Gary read the book? It took me all of five seconds to load in this program, and if he would like to see real speed, I suggest he saves a long letter to disk, and re-loads. I have saved seven paragraphs of a letter, in order to write this one, and I expect it to take all of two seconds to put it back! The only difference with disk is that the title becomes EASYRITE, to conform to the eight letter filename requirement.

The lack of merge facilities is covered by the 'Home Use' description, while the criticism of lack of printer control codes is answered by 'Show me the typewriter . . . . . .' etc.

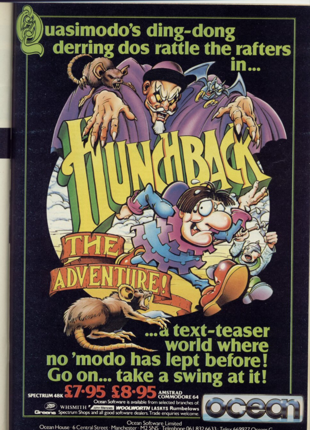
The final paragraph is sheer nonsense. I admit that it takes a little while to learn how to use the things that it will do, in order to do those that you think it won't, but I have found that by printing out the COMMAND SUMMARY and fastening it to a piece of card propped up at the side of the monitor is arguably easier than having a HELP menu scattered over the screen. As with so many things, practice perfects.

To say that it is more of a word mincer than processor is without doubt absolute rubbish. Of all the things that Arnold can do, the one I most appreciate is the facility to write letters with as many mistakes as I like, and never having to use the 'Tippex' again. I hope one day to be able to afford a 'Real' processor, but in the meantime, I am more than satisfied.
As for value for money, I obtained my copy at 'THE SHOW' for £5.00, so that I am possibly biased.

The most serious aspect of the article is that in a magazine sold for the purpose of describing software, there were so many assessments of other programs of which I have no personal knowledge?
**GA Salter, Shipton-U-Wychwood, Oxford**

**Am I to understand that you are not in agreement with our Mr Liddon? You seem to be defending the Easywriter program by claiming that it's budgeted for home use, and better than a typewriter. Now that's a point of view which is really silly, and here's why. Firstly why do people put up with half witted, badly designed programs on the grounds that they are for 'home use'? I should have thought that a word processor designed for the non-computer buff needed to be pretty smart, if it's to do the job and be easy to use. Your opinion that, since this is merely a 'home use' word processor it need not have the power and flexibility of, say, Taswsord, is entirely bad. Very few of Tasword's facilities are unused, and it's always better to have a command and not need it, than to need it and not have it. And by the way Tasword IS also a budget priced, home use, word processor, it's the likes of Neword at £70 and Wordstar at £110 that aren't.**

**And stop comparing typewriters to wordprocessors, they have nothing in common except as a means of getting words onto paper. What you have to do is to compare like with like, if you do that you will find that Gary was fully aware that he was reveiwing a 'simple correspondence printing program', and that's why he came to the conclusion that it was simply rubbish. He apologises about missing the bit about the disk but suggests that if you can afford a disk drive, you can put typewriters behind you and get a proper word processor, which also prints correspondence — simply — for only a few pounds more.**


Quasimodo's ding-dong derring dos rattle the rafters in...
HUNCHBACK
THE ADVENTURE!
...a text-teaser world where no 'modo has lept before!
Go on... take a swing at it!
SPECTRUM 48K £7·95 £8·95 AMSTRAD COMMODORE 64
Ocean Software is available from selected branches of:
WHSMITH John Menzies WOOLWORTH LASKYS Rumbelows
Greens Spectrum Shops and all good software dealers. Trade enquiries welcome.
ocean
Ocean Software Limited
Ocean House · 6 Central Street · Manchester · M2 5NS · Telephone 061 832 6633 · Telex 669977 Oceans G

# MINI OFFICE II

**DATABASE SOFTWARE were so surprised by the success of MINI OFFICE I, they decided to have another go. The result is a more ambitious package boasting a wider range of features. For those with disk drives the program is run from one menu. And this is probably the first utility designed to also use the AMX MOUSE. MINI OFFICE II runs on the 464/644 and 6128 computers and costs £14.95 cass, £19.95 disk.**

## The Word Processor

The main menu appears once the program has loaded, from here you can perform all of the little things that word processors do, including loading, merging and saving text. Each option leads into a warren of sub-menus; PRINT goes into a further four pages of options. At the top of the first menu is EDIT TEXT, which takes you to the business end of the program.

Once there you are confronted by a largely blank screen, except for two inverse lines at the top giving a continuous numerical readout of the words in a document, number of free characters and the state of some of the toggles; insert or overwrite, caps on or off.

Green screen users may find themselves adjusting the brightness. The dullness of the display isn't the fault of your monitor, instead, it's the fault of those who have colour screens and expect to be able to use serious software. The initial colour selection is suited for colour monitors but the manual says that function keys 1 to 3 can be used to alter the colours of the text, border and background. I couldn't get it to work.

### ON WITH THE TYPING

Typing text works very well — simply hit a key and a letter appears on the screen, great so far. The main drawback is that this isn't a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) word processor — the the work on the screen doesn't look like the finished document — and in this case I certainly hope not. Not only did I have to restrict my line length to those offered on the main menu (20, 40 or 80 columns), but the wretched program even managed to split words across lines and perform all manner of butchery on the text. I set the line length, from the print menu, to 65 columns and then returned to the edit page to play with the different justifications; flush left, flush right or flush both. What a game! The flush left produced text — split words and all — pushed up against each margin, but with two huge rivers, four or five spaces wide, running diagonally across the screen. I just couldn't resist the temptation to print it out. What appeared was text 65 columns wide, no rivers and no split words — a miracle.

If your brain can cope with the textual disorientation that the programs enjoys, you can certainly rely on the wide range of printer options to produce the goods. These include variable line spacing, line lengths, page lengths, headers, and footers. Other commands for your printer to muse over can be embedded in the text such changing the type face, or forcing a new page or indent. In line with this program being part of a suite there's a command to accept text from a Database record so permitting rudimentary mail merge operations.

### BLEMISHES ON THE EMEBELISHMENTS

The search and replace command works quickly but does insist on working from the top, to the bottom of a document, although you can force it to perform optional replacements. It was in this mode that I discovered a little buglet. The program got stuck when I said 'Yes' to replacing a character which appeared on the very far left margin; the only way out was to say 'No' and return to it later. You can select between entering text in overwrite mode or insert mode, which puts new words between earlier ones. The insert mode works in a similar way to *Tasword*, but is more untidy in the number of lines it opens up into which text is chuntered.

One command might be useful is CTRL W. It prompts you to type in a single word — 'rabbit' will do. The next time you want to write 'rabbit' simply type 'ra' and hit the copy key, and the complete word appears. The program can hold up to fifty words but I can't help feeling that this facility would have been more worthwhile if it stored sentences or phrases.

While this isn't as friendly as *Tasword*, or as neat, it can do the job quite efficiently, even though it insists on doing strange things with your text before you get to print it out. Very useful for the for the irregular user who just wants medium sized documents which can be quite complex.

To move onto the next program you return to the main menu and select the option 'Mini Office II'. Sometimes this works, sometimes it doesn't — it can just leave you sitting there like a pranet listening to your disk drive whirring round and round.

## The Database

The first thing that struck me about this section was the ease with which a database can be designed. The EDIT STRUCTURE has a page of 20 lines, each representing a possible field. By starting at the top, 01, simply hit the enter key to make the cursor move across one column and prompt you for the field name. The field can be text, numeric, derived from a formula or in date form. If the field is to contain text, the next prompt asks for the maximum length it should allow for. If the field is to be derived from a formula, then you are asked for the two fields and the mathematical operand to produce the result. This could prove to be very useful. However, its value is limited by your only being able to use two fields in a calculation, and the fact that both of these fields must already have been defined — at least it means you can't tie the program up in mathematical knots.

After designing the database information may be input. With *Mini Office* this is rather like form filling, since the DATA EDIT page presents you with a screen, with the field names on the left, each with a blank line. The length of the line corresponds to the size of the particular field. The cursor appears on each line as you enter the information. If the data structure demands that the data in one field should be in date form, ie DD/MM/YY, then the cursor won't let you go until you've got it right. Numeric calculations are performed when the last field has been entered. It's all very easy.

### DOING THE THINGS DATABASES DO

Databases manipulate information, and this one has some very helpful routines to do just that. The SEARCH command is very powerful. You are given a blank form where you insert the information you want matched to the records in your database. You could, for instance, search for all people called Evans, living in Evesham with a black dog called Patrick (assuming of course that you keep obscure facts like that). If you don't know how an item is spelt you can use wild cards, thus Evesham could be 'spelt' Em. Data matched in a search can be 'marked', to be saved or printed separately from the rest of the database. The SORT command allows records to be sorted in ascending or descending order based on an alphabetic or numeric field. Both the SEARCH and SORT command work with respectable speed.

Further commands allow calculations to be performed across an entire database. Not only can you produce a total stock value from all of your records, with the ease and sophistication a miser would envy, but you could add a percentage to the value of each item of stock at a speed that would turn such a man green. Calculations can be performed on all records in the database or just those which have been marked.

Although this database doesn't have the capacity or sophistication of *Masterfile*, it's very easy to use and has a few useful tricks of its own.

## The Spread Sheet

Spread sheets are probably the most under rated of all computer tools. With a little imagination they can be used to solve all sorts of numerical mysteries. This spread sheet is really quite basic, its facilities are far below those of *Master Calc*, but nevertheless it should satisfy many appetites.

*The Mini Office* spread sheet provides nearly a thousand cells



into which you can slot your text, data or formulas — an easy enough operation. Text can be set so that it goes across more than a single column, and justified left if need be. For numerical information it's helpful to be able to define the number of decimal places. Sadly you cannot mix numbers with Pound, Dollar or percentage signs so getting a smart presentation is difficult.

The power of a spread sheet rests with its mathematical ability. The functions available are pretty basic, just the normal four operands, no fancy stuff. One interesting command lets you put the largest, or smallest value, from a whole range of cells into a cell on its own. With a bit of thought that facility could usefully be employed sorting a range of values into order. The spread sheet allows two modes of calculation. The first calculates, when instructed to, by hitting 'U', the second continuously updates the sheet whenever a new value is inserted, though this can get a little tedious as it's quite slow.

The program allows the entire sheet to be printed out on an Amstrad or Epsom compatible printer. If it's a very large sheet the task has to be done in sections, so it takes a little time. The designers have thoughtfully provided a means of sending ESC codes to your printer so you could make a printout a little easier by setting your printer to 'little print'. Apart from the normal SAVE command, for saving the entire sheet, there is an EXTRA command which saves a special file for use with the graphics section.

I was quite pleased with the spread sheet's performance but I hated its inability to update the contents of cells, as you moved the cursor around the sheet. Normally, when you move the cursor to the right you expect to see the contents chunter along to the left, not in this case. Only the cells' reference letters, or numbers, actually change. If you move one screen to the right, you are still looking at the data from the last screen, which only updates when you pass the cursor over in the other direction. This failure to refresh the contents of each cell can lead to some pretty confusing moments.

## Graphics

The graphics program allows you to create three types of graph; a pie chart, a line graph or bar graph. Each graph is produced from one or more 'data sets' which are simply lists of numbers, each number having a name. You can either enter the data into a data set directly via the edit page, or you can load data from a disk file, which may have been compiled on the spread sheet.

The pie chart can only graph one data set. The program allows emphasis of one or more segments of a pie chart, producing a sort of exploded effect, with some of the segments pulled slightly out of the circle. Patterns for individual segments can be selected from series at the base of the screen. Once the chart is drawn, a key is inserted labeling each segment of the chart.

The line and bar graphs are used when graphing more than one set of data. Again a number of different effects can be produced, like 3D bars for example, just by selecting from the various icons at the side of the screen. When a graph is finished it can either be dumped to a printer or saved to disk.

The graph drawing is very fast indeed and the program quite easy to use. The only limitation is that you can only graph a maximum of 3 sets of data, but if that isn't a problem you should be able to produce some very satisfactory results.

## Communications

The software offers the full range of communication options enabling you to talk to bulletin boards, Telecom Gold or another computer just a few feet away. The only thing that doesn't come with the package is the RS232 interface and, if you want to get on the phone, a modem.

The software is designed to simplify the selection of the different protocols used in the world of computer communications. Three different protocols are set up already and these can be accessed from the opening menu. If you want your computer to talk to a really strange system then the software lets you define a protocol you need.

Sending or receiving files is made simple. The software can cope with ordinary ASCII files as well as the more demanding non-ASCII files, such as machine code programs.

Memory buffers can be set up to make the transfer of data more efficient. For example you could prepare a whole series of messages and load them into a buffer, before you even dial the recipient computer. Buffers are also useful for examining the contents of a file, either before it has been sent or after it's been received.

Although the wide variety of options allows you to configure the computer to talk to the likes of Prestel and Micronet, the software was not designed to cope with the anachronisms of these types of systems. The package is ideal for working with the scrolling software used by Micro Link, Telecom Gold or everyday bulletin boards.

## Label Printer

The last program in the package is designed to be used with the Database program to print a series of labels, perhaps with addresses or stock records on them.

This type of application might seem quite useless until you try struggling with the huge variety of formats that labels seem to come in. Not only do they vary in size but they vary in the number of labels across and down one sheet. The software is designed to make fitting the data onto the labels a lot less bothersome.

The edit page is used to plan the layout of the diferent fields which are to be printed, to make sure that they all fit within the confines of the label. Once that is done you just have to tell the computer how many labels there are across the page and everything should work first time. But, just in case, there is a test option which only prints a sample to see if you've hit the spot.

### In the verdict

For the money Database are asking you really are getting a lot, and it's not all rubbish either. Of course there are some annoying aspects to the package, not least the word processor's insistance on strangling text, or the inability of the spread sheet to keep the facts in order. There are a number of minor points I would have changed to improve its finish. For example, it would have made sense to keep command keys common between the programs, but the help page on the word processor is fetched with CTRL ? while 'H' does the same on the spread sheet. Also, the manual contains some silly mistakes and the whole lot would have been easier to use if someone had included some dummy test files for the humble user to experiment with. As a suite of programs the degree of interaction between its parts is limited. While the word processor can read data from the database, and the graphics package reads data from the spread sheet without too much pain, you have to run a separate program called 'Convert' if you want to move data along the non-standard routes.

*Mini Office II* deserves to meet with more success than its unworthy predescessor *Mini Office I*. While I couldn't recommend it for REALLY serious applications, it should comfortably meet the requirements of those who want to experiment with these types of applications.

**Jeremy Spencer**



AM-TECH

# ON THE MOVE

**DAVID PAUL looks at more educational games with particular attention to two simulation programs.**

In the early days of educational computing when publishers were eager to present schools with a comprehensive list of software, **Five Ways Software**, a company devoted to well researched and tested educational programs, was engaged by several major publishers to produce programs for the schools list. Much of the resulting software appeared only in educational catalogues — but, as an experiment, some publishers transferred the programs to more popular micros, re-packaged them and made them generally available. Ironically, in some instances the programs were improved in the process and documentation and packaging were superior to the schools version.

The programs produced by Five Ways Software for Heinemann Education and later released on the Spectrum 48K for the home market were taken over by another publisher, Hill MacGibbon, who were building up a list of quality programs — 'Games to stretch the mind', exam revision courses and educational software.

Recently two simulation programs have been made available for the Amstrad by Hill MacGibbon.

## RALLY DRIVER

This is a computer simulation with immediate appeal. After a tape loading time of five minutes you are presented with an opening screen showing a car fascia with steering wheel, speedometer, handbrake on/off warning light, flashing turn indicators, digital clock and an extra clock showing elapsed time. Beneath the fascia there is an area of screen reserved for time control checks and messages informing the driver of approaching road hazards as well as reports of changing weather conditions.

Through the car windscreen is a 3D view of the road ahead with junctions, landscape features, occasional hazards and of course, the time control checks. The graphics make good use of colour and the roads scroll towards you at varying speeds depending how you use the accelerator. Views through the windscreen relate to the route you have chosen.

An integral part of the program is the folded map for the rally inside the cassette case, this is rather small (19cm by 13cm) and although just suitable for home use several copies or a larger version would be more useful for school purposes.

The map should be studied carefully before the actual rally is attempted — some roads are full of sharp bends whilst others have good straight 'runs' which might help to achieve a faster time. There are short cuts but these are not always available, a private road might be closed or a track could be flooded.

The rally itself is in three stages, your goal as competitor is to be placed among the top three drivers at the final stage. First you must achieve a high placing in the previous stages as only the top seven drivers can go on from stage 1 to stage 2 and the top five from stage 2 to stage 3.

To complete a stage you must drive through each time control - four in stage 1 and five each in stages 2 and 3. There are alternative routes shown on the map and the times taken depend upon navigational skills as well as driving technique. Marshals at Time Controls inform competitiors of the road conditions ahead and this message scrolls across the lower screen in the message area below the car fascia. At the end of each stage a leader board is shown with your score made up of the time you took to complete that stage in minutes and seconds. Any penalties you have incurred are added to this.

Penalties can be in a number of ways, failure to enter the correct Passage Control letters at the Time Control causes 20 seconds to be added to your time — the letters appear on boards en route; failing to stop at a Time Control (50 seconds), crashing your car — 30 seconds or 5 minutes depending upon speed going off the road or travelling in the wrong direction up a road (30 seconds). Hitting an animal or pedestrian is quite lenient at 5 minutes.

Controlling the car is either by joystick or keyboard and cursor controls, unusually, many children preferred to use the keyboard all the time instead of joystick with occasional use of the keyboard for certain controls. There are some nice programming touches, eg if you are travelling faster than 30 mph you find it's not easy to turn into a junction and at 45 mph you find it difficult to read the letters on the Passage Control boards — as you would in a real rally car.

There is scope for problem solving, group discussion and work 'off the computer' in a wide range of subjects. Keeping a record of their experiences on the rally could lead to both creative and descriptive writing in English whilst measuring and calculating speed and distances involve mathematical skills. Giving directions and compass work can also be introduced.

Ordnance Survey and related map-work follows quite naturally from the route planning needed for *Rally Driver*, many children are fascinated by road atlasses and several old RAC or AA handbooks donated by parents (or purchased at a nominal sum from the motoring organisations) can be very useful. The motoring organisations themselves are usually very helpful and will supply publicity material and rally maps.

Car manufacturers are a good source of material and many large garages are only too pleased to donate old catalogues — children can find pictures of the latest cars in the Sunday supplements and might be curious about the current appeal of four-wheel drive vehicles.

The history of roads and road-making through the ages is an interesting subject that could also be introduced as is project work on bridges and tunnels — one group using the Amstrad to build up a database for other groups to query.

The Highway Code and a quiz on road signs and all aspects of road safety, seat belts for rear seat passengers for instance, could be discussed. Local Road Safety organisations will normally provide useful material.

## RUN FOR GOLD

In this simulation you take on the role of a middle distance runner competing against top athletes at four major venues — Crystal Palace, European and World Championships and the Olympics, each becoming progressively more difficult.

After loading you are presented with an opening screen asking if you would like Level 1, Level 2 or the demonstration mode. Your first task is to name two runners, the following screen asks you to choose the event — 400m, 800m, or 1500m. The computer then places your runner in a competition at a local meet automatically giving you a lane position. The screen is divided into two parts, the larger showing your runner in the starting position and a smaller separated area to the right with a real-time clock, two vertical bar-graphs, one to indicate the pace of the runner in metres per second and one showing the amount of energy the runner has left.

At the start of the race there is the small figure of the starter beneath the graphs, after the start this is replaced with a countdown of the distance left to run — essential in planning your race strategy.

After the sharp crack of the starting pistol you start your runner either by pressing the required key or joystick fire button. You must steer your runner to keep in the right lane and you must judge by watching the fluctuating bar-graphs when to increase the pace — which rapidly depletes energy, whilst bearing in mind the distance left to run. If you 'jump the gun' at the start of the race the event is started again, two false starts and you will be disqualified. Running off the track or changing lanes can also lead to disqualification.

The graphics are well done with 3D views of the track ahead and a scrolling background, you can see the other runners in front of you and there is a nice feeling if you manage to overtake them! There are sound effects and the scrolling background is fascinating to watch.

Working with *Run for Gold* can lead to discussions on Health and Fitness, Diet, Smoking — as well as mathematical work in graphing the race results and a lot of research work in the 'Guinness Book of Records' to see how your champions compare.

Both tape programs run on the 6128 but a minor irritation is that the documentation for both *Rally Driver* and *Run for Gold* include instructions to transfer the programs from tape to the Spectrum microdrive whilst no help is given to the Amstrad owner with a disk drive.

*Rally Driver* and *Run for Gold* are published by Hill MacGibbon on tape only at £7.95 each, suitable for any Amstrad CPC.

## CHIP CHAT

Have you an original program that you think others might be interested in? If so — how about sending a copy on tape or disk with loading instructions and brief program notes for review in AMTIX!

Programs can be for school use, eg A Teacher's Mark Book/Test Grading Program or for home use with an emphasis on an aspect of learning.

Programs to: **David Paul, CHIP CHAT, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**



# ART — AN ENJOYABLE PASTIME

**Some two years ago MELBOURNE HOUSE launched MELBOURNE DRAW, on the Spectrum. At the time it was the first 'easy to use' Art Utility. The world of pixels had been opened up for the non-programmer. Now an age and several hits later MELBOURNE DRAW has transferred to the Amstrad with quite a few major differences. It takes someone with experience to investigate such a utility, and after doodling in the margins of his French school exercise book for years, ROBIN CANDY takes up the story . .**

**The 16 colour palette on offer for selection in MELBOURNE DRAW's low res mode: blue, bright yellow, bright cyan, bright red, bright white, black, bright blue, bright magenta, cyan, yellow, pastel blue, pink, bright green, pastel green, flashing blue/yellow and flashing pink/sky blue. In medium res mode the first four colours are available, and in hi res mode only the blue and bright yellow.**

For me there are few pastimes more enjoyable than computer art (not only is the hobby satisfying it can prove financially rewarding with software houses commissioning you to do pictures for games). So it was with great pleasure that I loaded up this old favourite of mine from Spectrum days into my Amstrad, and a greater pleasure to discover how much more advanced it is than its ageing parent.

Once loaded, *Melbourne Draw* presents you with a blank (blue) screen in the centre of which is a yellow cursor. This is a bit of a daunting start especially as there isn't a menu in sight. I believe that art utilities should be easy to use and a requirement to refer to the manual should be limited as much as possible. In this case however, pressing Enter causes a menu to appear along the top of the screen. This contains the following main options: **Control, Colours, Lines, Blocks, Textures, Areas** and **Files**. Selecting the desired option is very easy; just use the cursor keys or joystick to highlight the option and press Enter. A sub-menu is then pulled down and the same procedure is repeated to gain access to a function. This makes life easy for the first time user, but as you become familiar with it *Melbourne Draw* allows you to type in the initial letters of the desired option, a process which may ultimately be quicker. To get out of any selection or action, pressing Escape returns you to the main or sub-menu.

Under the **Control** menu heading the program copes with basic options such as **resolution mode, cursor** and **magnify mode**. The resolution option is very important because it determines the number of colours available and the pixel size. Highly detailed pictures may have to be in high resolution but this is at the expense of colour. In low resolution (160 x 200 pixels) the palette offers 16 colours, in medium (320 x 200) four are available while in high resolution (640 x 200) you are restricted to only two colours. Any artist must make some vital and basic decisions before embarking on a masterpiece, and *Melbourne Draw* certainly enforces this discipline — you must decide in what resolution your picture is going to be before commencing because changing in the middle of creating clears the screen.

The **Cursor** option allows you to alter the cursor size and shape. On all 'art' programs magnify modes are of the utmost importance. The Spectrum *Melbourne Draw* featured a fabulous magnify mode and fortunately so does this Amstrad version. Selecting the option creates a window which shows the area immediately surrounding the current cursor position enlarged to enormous proportions. This allows you to work on individual pixels, switching them 'on' or 'off', in the magnified area as well as seeing the effect once it has been reduced back to normal size. When working in the area covered by the window it's possible to move it. Also on the Control menu is an option to clear the screen.

As the title suggests the ▶



**The demo picture, suitably enough, shows Leonardo da Vinci in front of his keyboard about to paint Ms Mona Lisa. You can get some fairly baroque colour effects with this masterpiece! Next month Fra Angelico Candimus will be exhibiting some of his latest works for the Amstrad and MELBOURNE DRAW when he concludes his examination of the utility.**

**Colour** option deals exclusively with setting colour, the number of colours available dependent on the chosen resolution. This menu is very straight forward, offering options to change the current colour being used as well as altering the border colour. The really exceptional command available here is XOR mode, which caters for the mixing of colours — but don't be surprised if you get some odd chromatic results. The best way to discover its usefulness is to experiment.

The **Lines** menu includes various shapes that may be drawn such as boxes, circles, ellipses (very useful) plus an airbrush option. As well as drawing lines you can *elastic band* them. That is to say that you plot a point and then move the cursor. A line from the plotted point then follows the cursor about the screen. Elastic banding is one of the most useful features of art utilities as it lets you see what the effect of a line is before actually committing it to the screen. The box, circle and ellipse functions all use elastic banding as well. An unusual function on the lines menu is the Zap function. Basically this colours a line running in any direction the shade you want, providing it is in the Amstrad's palette. Airbrush produces a random pattern of pixels around the point of your cursor. By changing colours while using the airbrush it is possible to get some very interesting effects.

Next along the main menu is the **Block** menu. This offers the facility of creating windows in your picture that the computer can remember. It is rather similar to elastic banded boxes in the Lines section. Once a window has been defined the computer remembers the exact contents of that box (it can only manage one window at a time and this is limited in size). This block is then protected by the computer against consequent commands except for textures and other remember commands. Once you have defined a window this can be copied to other parts of the screen or mirrored horizontally, vertically or both at the same time. The drag command on this menu lets you actually drag parts of the picture around the screen. With this function you could draw accurately only half of a butterfly, for instance, window it, copy it to another area of the screen, flip the copied window horizontally, and then drag this mirrored half up to the original and join it on, thus creating a complex symmetrical shape accurately in only half the time it would take to do the whole thing.

Sometime in the construction of your latest masterpiece you may come across an area that has to be filled with a regular pattern — a brick wall for instance. *Melbourne Draw* caters for this with the **Textures** options. As well as the preset textures already present, the program allows you to define your own. You can drop bits of texture into your picture, alternatively you can blend them into the screen using the XOR command to get some interesting effects. Using this menu you also have the ability to draw using a texture. The **Step** command allows you to specify the distance between one bit of texture and another. With the help of the XOR command the Textures menu becomes a great asset to the program, effects that could take ages to figure out on graph paper can be created in an instant.

The **Areas** menu is intended to be used in conjunction with the Textures menu. Before an area can be filled either with colour or a texture you must tell the computer what the area is like. Once areas have been defined they can either be coloured in using the fill colour option or the fill texture option can be selected and the area filled with a pattern. Other options available on this menu are **Colour Swap** and **Colour Merge**. Colour swap is used to swap pixels of one colour with another colour while colour merge is similar but this time the colours are blended together.

The last menu option is the **Files** menu. The sole purpose of this menu is to save and retrieve files. These files can be your pictures or even your newly created textures. It is an extremely useful option considering it may take may sittings before your masterpiece is completed.

**So there you have the details of what the program can actually do but is it easy enough for even the bumbling Candy to produce a good picture? See how *Melbourne Draw* fares in the practical tests next month when Robin brings you some of his *Melbourne Draw* computer generated art.**



Spindizzy
A 3-D GAME OF SKILL
BY PAUL SHIRLEY
DJR
Electric Dreams
SOFTWARE
Available on the 48K Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64 from Electric Dreams Software, 31 Carlton Crescent, Southampton. Telephone: (0703) 229694.
"Spindizzy is quite simply one of THE most impressive games on ANY home micro" OVERALL 98% – AMTIX
"Spindizzy combines marvellous graphics, testing puzzles and a large area to make a stunningly original and challenging game" AA RATING 96% AMSTRAD ACTION
BEGINNERS SECTION
MULTI-SCREEN SHOT – AMSTRAD VERSION



SOFTWARE
SOFTWARE
SOFTWARE
SOFTWARE
SOFTWARE
SOFTWARE
MR G. PLAYER
10 THE ARCADE
PLAYTONVILLE

This is the easiest way of buying your Games and Utilities

# BY MAIL!



**Retailers don't always have everything in stock you might want, but if it's within our power to get it for you, then we will. ANY of the software reviewed in this OR ANY issue of AMTIX! can be ordered by using the form below.**

**But to avoid disappointment, please ring first to check availability of unusual items!**

**AMTIX! Mail Order is backed by the resources of Newsfield Ltd, publishers of this magazine, CRASH and ZZAP! 64, which has been supplying more than 150,000 computer users with software for over 2 years, so you can be sure of the very best in service.**

**There is no mail order catalogue involved, just use the prices quoted in the reviews in AMTIX! or the know retail price. Should you have any queries on prices, just ring the number shown on the form and our staff will advise you.**

**DISCOUNTS GALORE!**

**Anyone may take advantage of the discount coupons on the form — £1 off orders worth more than £20, and 50p off orders worth more than £10. Additionally, AMTIX! Subscribers are automatically entitled to further discounts on every item ordered. We make no charges for post and packing (within the UK)**

**Nothing could be simpler — fill in the form today and order whatever you like.**

## Order What You Want from the Largest Range of Software You Could Ever Wish For!

### AMTIX! MAIL ORDER FORM

Telephone Ludlow (0584) 5620

Name ..........................................

Subscriber No (if applicable) ..........................................

Address ..........................................

..........................................

..........................................

..........................................

Postcode ..........................................

Please send me the following items: BLOCK CAPITALS please!

**Please note:** some software reviewed may not be available until its release date. If you are in any doubt about availability, **please ring first**. We cannot be held responsible for delays resulting from late or non-release of titles when reviewed or previewed before their official release dates were known.

| Title | Software House | Disk/Cass | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Sub Total: £ | |
| | | Less Discount: £ | |
| | | **Total enclosed: £** | |

**SPECIAL DISCOUNTS**

**£1** OFF ANY ORDER WORTH MORE THAN £20

**50p** OFF ANY ORDER WORTH MORE THAN £10

**Sorry – only ONE voucher per order!**

All prices are as quoted under review headings or known retail prices and include VAT. AMTIX! makes no charge for post and packing inside the UK. Customers in Continental Europe should add the equivalent of 70p per item ordered. Outside Europe, please write first so that we may advise on postage rates.

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to **NEWSFIELD PUBLICATIONS LTD.** Please do not send any coinage.

**AMTIX! MAIL ORDER, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB**

**Please do NOT enclose this form/payment with any other correspondence to AMTIX! Magazine editorial, as it will only delay processing your order and may result in loss.**

# HERE COMES



**GREMLIN GRAPHICS are best known for their lively arcade games like MONTY MOLE, but now there's a new and more serious aspect to Gremlin in the form of their new label DISCOVERY, dedicated to what might be called 'useful' software. First up is PYRADEV, reviewed here.**

These days it is unusual, as well as refreshing, to come across a product that combines a well thought out approach with an implementation befitting to the machine that it was written for. However, just such a product has been developed by **Discovery**. The product is, in fact, a suite of programs known collectively as *Pyradev* that constitute a complete assembler /utilities package for the CPC464/664/6128.

*Pyradev* is made up of a text editor, a macro-assembler, a monitor, a disk-editor and a general disk utility section. The system is entirely disk based and menu driven and comes supplied on a single 3" disk, with accompanying manual.

To enter *Pyradev*, you simply type: **RUN "PYRADEV"** and the main menu program is then loaded from the disk. From here you can select any of the sections described above as well as change the logged disk drive, delete any backup files or exit back to BASIC. Each of the sections is stored as a separate program on the disk, and so a working disk can be generated that contains only those that you require, thereby freeing space for data. For example if you are writing an assembler program it is unlikely that you will require the disk-editor and so this may be removed from your work disk.

The first thing that you notice when you get down to the nuts and bolts is that *Pyradev* initialises all ROMS that you have connected into your system when you enter the main-menu. The reason is that the highest free area of memory can then be determined for operation within *Pyradev*, it is however very annoying when you have a serial interface ROM that grabs 2K which you don't want to use - the only solution is to physically remove the ROM. It would have been nice to be able to enter *Pyradev* with only the ROMs you require initialised to avoid this conflict, which may well detract from the overall functionality of the product.

## The Text Editor

The text editor is intended primarily for generating source files for use with the *Pyradev* assembler, although it can produce standard ASCII files that may be accessed from either CP/M or BASIC. Text is entered on an 80 x 24 screen with the last row reserved for a status line.

On entering the editor a catalogue of all the files available on your disk is given and you then select an input file (if you are editing a file that already exists) and an output file. The output file is used as a default to store the text that you generate, although you may change this at a later stage. Having selected the filenames, the document may then be amended or created.

*Pyradev* uses a full-screen editor ie text can be inserted, deleted or amended where it appears on the screen rather than having to call the line to a separate 'working' area. Having said this the editor does work on a line-input basis, where each line is treated as a separate block of text and no characters are written to the file until an entire line has been entered. If a line is subsequently altered by mistake it is possible to abort the alterations. Input on a line is in an overtype mode, and so additional characters have to be inserted manually.

Movement about the file is easily achieved via the cursor keys. When the screen scrolls the status line is re-written, however, if the screen is continuously scrolled *Pyradev* doesn't bother to rewrite the status line until you've finished. This is a nice touch that improves the speed of operation vastly. The status line itself contains a minimal amount of information — the name of the default infile and outfile, the current line and column and the default disk drive — and is also used to pass messages to the user while editing.

Another friendly feature of the editor is the ability to program the function keys directly. This is simply done by selecting a key to program and then typing up to 32 characters which are recorded. A catalogue of the current function key assignments can be called up at any time.

The tabs are set by default to every 8 spaces, although this can be re-programmed by the user, movement between tabs can then be forwards or backwards. The colours used to display both foreground and



background can be set by the user. These colours together with the tab settings and the key definitions can then be saved to a parameter file, which can be reloaded at a later session.

The basic block operations are copy and delete. However, because the copy option uses the last block marked (whether it is still displayed or not) this can also be used as a block move command by deleting the required block and then moving the cursor to the required position and pressing the COPY key — this should be a familiar technique to *NewWord* users. *Pyradev* only allows files to be merged to the end of a document, although this can be used in conjunction with the block commands to move them to any position in the text.

A simple search and search-and-replace function is provided, although I found it rather awkward to use due to an unusual format for specifying the strings involved. Each string must be enclosed in quotes, and when the search facility is used on a second (and subsequent) occasion, the last string used must be overwritten. This was something that I found occurred throughout *Pyradev* particularly when entering filenames when pressing the ESC and cursor keys produced the normal 'funny' characters — strange how the same problems keep on cropping up again and again, isn't it?

My final gripe with the editor is that no 'end of file' marker is provided and so I was never quite sure whether there was any more text lurking off the end of the page.

## The Macro Assembler

The Assembler is unquestionably the most powerful section of the whole package. The two main factors that make it so impressive are its flexibility, and the interaction with the user at assembly-time.

The flexibility arises in the number of formats that *Pyradev* will accept data and the number of commands available to control the operation of the assembler. Labels are optionally followed with a colon, and comments need not be proceeded with a semi-colon, except when they follow single byte instructions such as RET.

In addition to the usual Z80 mnemonics, codes are also provided for non-standard Z80 instructions. These are instructions that are not defined in the Zilog specification, but will work nevertheless on 90% of processors currently being produced. Essentially they allow the IX and IY registers to be treated as an additional four 8-bit registers, although their precise function is described in more detail in the accompanying manual.

Conditional assembly is provided in an IF..ENDIF or an IF ELSE ENDIF form, although the conditions may not be nested.

Print output can be controlled by using the PRINTR and TITLE directives. TITLE allows a header to be specified that is output at the beginning of each page. PRINTR specifies the page length and width, and also allows continuous stationary to be selected as well as suppression of line feeds.

Probably the single most useful feature is the ability to process macros. For the uninitiated a macro is a single reference that can be used to generate a section of code that is often required in a program. The macro is defined at the beginning of the program, and whenever the assembler detects a reference to the macro it is replaced by the defined section of code. Utilising this feature it is possible to make the end source file very readable and therefore easier to debug.

*Pyradev* permits macros that take parameters, and also labels within a macro that are automatically adjusted every time the macro is referenced to prevent duplication of the label.

When assembly is actually selected, you are prompted for the name of the main source file. Several options that determine the output format are then available. Generation of object code is to an optional file which can be named at this stage. A useful feature is that this can be specified as either an AMSDOS file or a CP/M file in which case it will not contain a header.

Selections can also be made for symbol table generation and cross reference table generation. The cross reference table is used when more than one file contains the source code and indicates which label is in which file. Finally, error reporting can be turned on or off and an override for LIST and NOLIST directives within the source can be selected.

Once assembly has been initiated, you are kept fully up to date on the progress which is very helpful if you are using several files (which may be stored on different disks). Another slightly unusual feature is that if listing is selected then the code is displayed on both passes of assembly, although I am not quite sure what value this is.

Assembly is very fast, particularly on the 6128 or an expanded 464/664. This is because optimum use is made of the additional memory banks to store the source code on the first pass removing the need to access the source file on the second pass. Assembling a fairly complex test file of nearly 18K took a mere 32 seconds to produced the finished object file.

## The Monitor

The *Pyradev* monitor is a relocating front-panel type. When it is entered you are given the choice of specifying either a high or a low address in memory that it should relocate to.

The front panel displays the register and flag states, a disassembly from the current memory location, a dump from the current memory location, the ROM states and memory bank selected and a list of the traps that have been set. 'Traps' are *Pyradev*'s equivalent of break-points when program execution is halted when a certain instruction is reached and control returned to the front panel. The traps work by patching the user RST entry and are reset when they are first encountered.

Commands are available for reading a file in from memory, or writing one out thereto as well as for selecting the current memory bank and switching between the various ROM select states. Code can either be single stepped, or double stepped when call instructions are bypassed.

Disassembly can be to screen, disk or printer and automatically generates labels when referenced by other instructions.

## The Disk Nurse

The disk nurse is a straight forward track/sector editor that detects all the CPC AMSTRAD formats. As as moving through the disk by track/sector you can step through a file by sector without having to trace it from the directory tracks. Once the track has been read, it can be edited on-screen and then written back to the disk.

A facility is also available for unerasing files that have not been overwritten on the disk, although you have to remember what the file was called. The Query function lets you search through a disk for a particular string of numbers or text.

## The Utilities

The final section of *Pyradev* is a file management system. Facilities are provided for renaming, erasing and copying files on either drive. All of these are very straightforward and the copy also permits files to be copied to or from tape, although no attempt is made to crack the various devious methods of protection currently being employed by software houses.

## The Manual

Probably the most important aspect of a utilities package such as this is the quality of the documentation. DISCOVERY have done an excellent job of producing a clear, concise and easy to follow manual. No attempt is made to teach the user machine-code which is best left to books written specifically for this purpose, but each section is described in simple terms with each command given an individual entry.

## Overall

The power of the *Pyradev* system lies in the assembler which makes the package worthwhile on its own. It really is speedy and cuts down any development time no end. The editor is good, but I did find it slightly difficult to use after being accustomed to the Arnor equivalent. The monitor again does its job but is nothing really special, and the same applies to the editor.

However because of the versatility in the assembler's input it's possible to create files on other editors, as long as the file output is straight ASCII. The overall product is a very nice package indeed and though it may be confusing to a machine code novice, for 'serious' writers *Pyradev* provides an excellent environment for the creation, assemblage and de—bugging of any code you may want to write. As yet *Pyradev* is most definitely the best in its field and is worth a look at by anyone spending any amount of time writing code.

**Chris Laing**

**Pyradev is available at £29.95 on disk only**

# SUBSCRIBE TO AMTIX! FOR A YEAR'S WORTH OF GAMES INFO AND FUN

As a subscriber to AMTIX! you qualify for large future discounts on selected games, AND by using your subscriber code number, you also qualify for the regular, standing discount on software purchased through AMTIX! MAIL ORDER!




## AMTIX! SUBSCRIPTION

YES PLEASE! I want to subscribe to AMTIX! for one year

NAME ..............................

ADDRESS ..............................

..............................

..............................

.......... POST CODE ..............

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £15.00 made payable to NEWSFIELD LTD.

**AMTIX! SUBSCRIPTIONS, 1-2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1AQ**




# WAITING FOR THE BIG ONE

That awkward time of year between Christmas and the summer holidays has arrived when most of the software houses are keeping quiet until the next big sales push. Don't despair. This is the best time for adventurers. Whilst saving up for your next game (and it's a time when you can afford to be very selective), dig out an old favourite — something you haven't conquered yet. Boot up your trusty machine and have one helluva playing session.

There's nothing like immersing yourself in the imaginary world of a good adventure. I believe that in adventuring lies the future of mainstream electronic entertainment. Computers will continue to become more powerful and people will be able to indulge their imaginations more completely than ever before. Who knows what the future will bring? One thing is for certain. Interactive media will be a major feature of leisure in the future.

## AL-STRAD

**Rhinosoft, £2.50, cass**

While most of the major software houses are taking it easy at this time of year, the chance arises for new names to make their mark in an otherwise overcrowded market. *Al-Strad* is the first all text adventure from a new company called Rhinosoft. At the moment, there are very few details as to exactly when and where the game will be available and the review copy sent to me had no packaging of any kind either. Nevertheless, new games by daring companies can often be worth their weight in gold, so on with the review.

You take the part of a peasant called Al-Strad who lives in the kingdom of Microchip. Microchip is ruled by a peaceful old king called Kilobyte who, after many years, finally comes into contact with Sink, a nasty little thing who decides that he could have fun by going against all the laws of the kingdom before disappearing for a while and then returning to start all over again. However, up until now all his crimes had been minor offences, but this time he goes too far and one night gets into the castle where he finds the (yes you've guessed) beautiful princess, Sally Software.

This is where you come in, as an humble peasant who decides that he is man enough to rescue the princess and then pull in a hefty reward. For some reason, you now find yourself outside a disused and rundown hut. From this point on you are on your own, (with the exception of the odd and obscure hint that can take longer to fathom out than playing the first ten percent of the game).

You soon discover that you are, to quote the text, 'In a forest surrounded by trees.' Once a few bits and pieces have been collected, you have to find the way to several more locations and pick up the combination to a safe to have any hope of completing the adventure. Unfortunately it isn't any real challenge to solve the puzzles that allow access to more locations. Also, the interaction with the computer is very limited which is one of the more disappointing factors of the game. If you are a relatively inexperienced adventurer then this might just be the right game for you, despite some of the apparent let downs, as it employs many of the puzzles a first time adventurer would appreciate. For the more experienced, it will undoubtedly appear lacking.

For all its faults, it's wittily written and that is something worth having in any adventure game these days. The main problem with the humour of the game is that it is often associated with other software houses and is a little hard on them, to say the least. It's an especially dangerous angle to take when some of the rivals who come in for caustic and cynical remarks are responsible for far greater feats of programming than the author of this game. Still, as long as you take the remarks with a pinch of salt, they can be enjoyed for what they are — a bit of fun. Another point about the humour is that if you get really annoyed with this game (which is quite possible), the odd swear word does lead to you being penalised and losing one of the objects you are carrying to disappear to another location, unreachable without finding your way to a deeper level of the game.

Although it has quite an interesting plot with a dubious quality of satire, *Al-Strad* lacks any new problems to solve — only different locations to solve them in (like inside software houses, or digging in sand to find an eternal supply of bananas — strange eh!). It's good to see a software house trying out a new approach to adventures with an attempt at humour, but it hasn't been as well written as it might and this shows during play.

Ultimately, I found the game little more than a pleasant distraction. Having played it just the once, there was not enough to drag me back to the keyboard a second time, though I doubt whether it would be too difficult to complete, having progressed so far on the first attempt. It just seems a shame that some of the vocabulary problems had not been ironed out more (I would not have minded missing a couple of the jokes if that's what it would have cost for such an improvement). Not bad for the price, but Rhinosoft will have to do something much better if they are to succeed in the future.

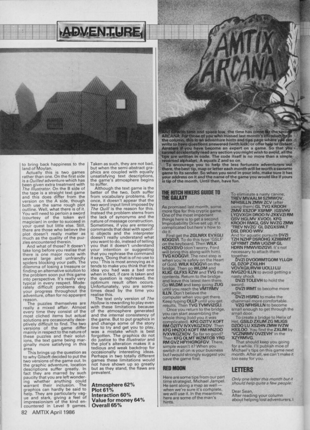
**Atmosphere 56%**
**Plot 55%**
**Interaction 55%**
**Lastability 52%**
**Value for money 57%**
**Overall 58%**

## THE HOLLOW

**Gilsoft, £6.50, cass**

The story begins with an unscrupulous king who uses everything for his personal gain. This causes his long suffering subjects to call on the services of a magician who disposes of the king in no time at all. Of course, it takes very little time for the magician to realise that the king had been onto a good thing and consequently begins to squeeze the land dry again. Once more the people rise, but the crafty magician has a plan.

He decides to put the Stones of Light and Dark at opposite ends of the kingdom so they may never be brought together again, leaving him in the desirable position of being all powerful. Guess . . . Yes, this is where you come in with the task of collecting all the Stones in order ▶




to bring back happiness to the land of Moylan.

Actually this is two games rather than one. On the first side is a *Quilled* adventure which has been given extra treatment with *The Illustrator*. On the B side of the tape is a straight text game and this does differ from the version on the A side, though both use the same rough plot outline. Well, what there is of it. You will need to perloin a sword (courtesy of the token evil magician) in order to succeed in your quest but little else. Still, there are those who believe the plot doesn't really matter as much as the quality of the puzzles encountered therein.

And what of those? It doesn't take long before you realise that there is one major route with several large and unfriendly spiders blocking your path. The dilemma of losing a treasure or finding an alternative solution to the problem soon put this game into perspective. It's really very typical in every respect. Moderately difficult problems dog your progress throughout the adventure, often for no apparent reason.

The puzzles themselves are really a mixed affair. Almost every time they consist of the most cliched items but actual solutions are occasionally deceptively difficult to find. The two versions of the game differ mainly in respect to the nature of these puzzles and their solutions, the text game being marginally more satisfying in this area.

This brings up the question as to why Gilsoft decided to put the two versions of the game out. In the graphic adventure, location descriptions suffer greatly. In fact they are marred by such paucity that you are left wondering whether anything could warrant their inclusion. The graphics can hardly be said to help. They are particularly vague and stark, giving a feel of impressionism of the kind encountered in Level 9 games. Taken as such, they are not bad, but when the semi-abstract graphics are coupled with equally unsatisfying text descriptions, the game's atmosphere begins to suffer.

Although the text game is the better of the two, both suffer from vocabulary problems. For once, it doesn't appear that the two word input limit imposed by *The Quill* is the reason for this. Instead the problem stems from the lack of synonyms and the nature of message construction. Sometimes, if you are entering commands that deal with specific objects and the interpreter doesn't really understand what you want to do, instead of telling you that it doesn't understand your intention or suggesting that you rephrase the command it says, 'Doing that is of no use to you.' This is most annoying as it tends to make you think that the idea you had was a bad one when in fact, if care is taken and the question is rephrased, the optimum result often occurs. Unfortunately, you are sometimes dead by the time you realise this.

The text only version of *The Hollow* is rewarding to play even with these limitations because of the atmosphere generated and the internal consistency of the game. But to put graphics in and change some of the story line to try and get you to play, was a mistake which is best forgotten. The graphics do not do justice to the *Illustrator* and the plot's alteration makes it a tedious and weak backdrop for occasionally interesting ideas. Perhaps in two totally different games these limitations would not have shown up so greatly but as they stand, the flaws are prevalent.

**Atmosphere 62%**
**Plot 61%**
**Interaction 60%**
**Value for money 64%**
**Overall 65%**

And so with time and space low, the time has come for the second ARCANA. For those of you who missed last month's introduction to the column, this is an adventure hints and tips page where you can write to have questions answered (with luck) or offer help to distant Amsters if you have become an expert on a game. So that you cannot accidentally read any section you might wish to avoid, all the tips are written in code. The code itself is no more than a simple reversed alphabet; A equals Z and so on.

To encourage you to help the less fortunate adventurers out there, the best tip, map or letter each month will be worth a cassette game to its sender. So when you send in your info, make sure it has your address on it and the name of the game you would like if yours is tip of the month. Until then, have fun.

## THE HITCH HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

As promised last month, some more tips for this cryptic game. One of the most important things here is to get a second Improbability Drive set up. It's complicated but here's how to do it.

First get the **ZGLNRX EVXGLI KOGGVI**. To do this type 'GSLF' on the keyboard. Then **WILK HZGXSVO** (don't worry, Ford will bring this along with him). **TVG KOGGVI**. The next step is when you're safely on the Heart of Gold. **WILK KOGGVI** on the bridge. Then go **WLDM** and **KLIG**. **GLFXS KZW** and **TVG** the contents. Return to the bridge and leave this latest item there. Go **WLDM** and keep going **ZUG** until you reach the **VMTRMV ILLN**. Don't believe the computer when you get there. Keep typing **OLLP** until you get results. Then **TVG TVMVIZGLI**.

Once you return to the bridge, you can start assembling the whole thing (told you it was complicated). **KFG OZITV KOFT RM OZITV IVXVKGZXOV**. Then **KFG HNZOO KOFT RM HNZOO IVXVKGZXOV**. So far so good? Then **KFG OLMT WZMTOB YRG RM GVZ HFYHGRGFGV**. There, simple wasn't it? When you switch it all on is your business but I would strongly suggest you save the game first.

## RED MOON

Here are some tips from our part time strategist, Michael Jampel. He sent along a map as well — when we're sure it's complete, we will use it. In the meantime, here are some of the man's hints.

To eliminate a nasty canine, **TREV MVAALM SZMWOV, NFHSILLN ZMW ZCV** (after using them) **GL TVG KROOH ZMW XSZOP XSFMP. (GSVHV LYQVXGH DROO IV-ZKKVZI RM GSV HGLMV XVOO). KFG KROOH RMGL GSV NVZG ZMW 'TREV NVZG' GL DZGXSWLT DSL DROO WRV.**

And for aquatic pursuits **DVZI TZH NZHP DSROHG XZIIBRMT GFYRMT ZMW UOZHP GL HDRN FMWVIDZGVI**. It's not necessary to attach them together.

**DVZI DVOORMTGOM YLLGH GL DZOP ZXILHH VOVXGIURVW UOLLI LU NVGZO ILLN** to avoid getting a nasty shock.

**DVZI TOLEVH** to hold the sword.

**DVZI IRMT** to become more agile.

**DVZI HSRIG** to make the chainmail more comfortable.

**VZG NFHSILLN** to become small enough to get through the small door.

To create a bridge to Helix of Het, **GSILD ZXLIM ZG MLIGS DZOO LU XSZHN ZMW IVZW HXILOO**. You find the **ZXLIM** by **'VCZNRMV OVZEVH'** in the **XZYRMVG**.

That should keep you going for a while. I'll publish moe of Michael's tips on this game next month. After all, we can't make it too easy for you.

## LETTERS

*Only one letter this month but it should help quite a few people:*

Dear Sean,
After reading your column about helping lost adventurers, I



thought it over and decided to do it. I have listed the adventures I can help with.

Never Ending Story, The Hobbit, Warlord, Heroes of Karn, Forest at World's End, Jewels of Babylon, Message from Andromeda, Classic Adventure, Mordon's Quest, and Colossal Cave Adventure.

Anyway, if people would like to get in touch, I would be very pleased to help.

**Tim Gurney, 10 Garwyn Avenue, Roundwood, Meliden, Prestatyn, Clwyd, North Wales, LL 19.**

Perhaps you should be doing my job! I think it's fair to remind anybody considering taking advantage of your kind offer that it would be polite to enclose a SAE . . .

That's it for this month. Keep writing in with letters (you can ask for help through these pages, you know), tips, maps and anything you can get your hands on — as long as it will help any adventurers out there. Send your entries to: **AMTIX ARCANA, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.**

**Even before the spectacular summer 84 crash of Liverpool-based Imagine (The Name of the Game), in neighbouring Manchester, Ocean had emerged as the other software biggie. Acquiring the title and goods of Imagine from the Receiver, Ocean quickly set about . . .**

# RENAMING THE NAME OF THE GAME

**Today Ocean and Imagine are undoubtedly one of the largest games software houses in Europe, but they have had their ups and downs, gaining a reputation for heavy promotion and for not sticking to their release dates. JULIAN RIGNALL went up to Manchester one cold wintry day to chat to DAVID WARD and COLIN STOKES two of the men behind the hype.**



The two men behind Imagine and ocean, Colin Stokes (left) and David Ward.

Unlike the old Imagine's magnificent Liverpool edifice, Ocean's Manchester HQ in Central Street is surprisingly modest, both in size and appearance. It seemed appropriate that the first person I spoke to should be **Colin Stokes**, who had once been part of the old Imagine. I asked him how people had reacted when the company miraculously reappeared. 'The re-emergence has been really successful — with the marketing strength that Ocean has it was really easy to resurrect the name of Imagine. People didn't say "Bruce Everiss and all that crew, let's hide. We



found myself thinking "who else is going to run the mega company." So when I went knocking on doors saying, "here I am, I'm an Imagine representative again," I didn't find one person who said "Well, I've got 10,000 *Whacky Waiters* in my warehouse. Can I give you them back before we talk?" It was all very friendly.'

But wasn't Ocean worried that the famous name carried a taint with it? Why buy it?

'You say, "what's up for grabs, is there anything which will be of use to us?". After all, with all the advertising, whether



> *". . . it was a market name that was known and you have to have been on Mars not to have known the name of Imagine. The difficulty was whether you considered it as a Titanic — was it worth raising or not?"*

don't want your products, we've already got thousands in our warehouse", they just took it as another opportunity to sell software and make a profit.

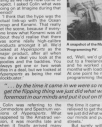
'From a personal point of view it was easy for me because I was originally the sales manager with Imagine anyway. Mixed up with all the controversy, it was ironic that I should be the guy who was fronting the whole thing worldwide so to speak. Viewing Imagine as an experience, a sort of closed chapter, I

good, bad or indifferent, it was a market name that was known and you have to have been on Mars not to have known the name of Imagine, so it was already established. The difficulty was whether you considered it as a Titanic — was it worth raising or not?'

Certainly the first game Ocean released under the new Imagine label **was** worth it, as Colin recalls. '*World Series Baseball* was a good product and that was one of the games made available by the liquidators — there wasn't another like it around — the graphics were very good. That and *Wizadore* on the BBC were the opening gambits, then *Hypersports* came along which got good reviews.'

I pointed out that the whole thing took off very suddenly, though. There was no slow build-up and months of advertising as we have now come to expect. I asked Colin what was going on at Imagine during that period?

'I think that the hype was the actual link-up with the Ocean group and Konami. That really set the scene, because if everyone knew what Konami was all about they'd realise that there was some really high-calibre products amongst it all. We'd looked at *Hypersports* as the major product, after all when you do a deal you look at the goodies and the baddies. You always get one or two weak titles in a deal, but we looked at *Hypersports* as being the real blockbuster.'



A snapshot of the Manchester 'Programming Pit'.

> *". . . by the time it came in we were so relieved to get the flipping thing we just did what was foremost in our minds and put it out on the streets.'*

Colin was referring to the Commodore and Spectrum versions of *Hypersports*. What happened to the Amstrad version, it was months late and when it finally arrived many were disappointed? He admitted, 'Well, we'd given the game out to a freelance programmer and he worked at it for eight months with loads of problems. At one point he nearly gave up programming the game, so by the time it came in we were so relieved to get the flipping thing we just did what was foremost in our minds and put it out on the streets.'

But surely with that lack of control over software develop-





ment Imagine must be facing all sorts of problems? What exactly goes on when a title is developed?

'We try to keep the best titles in-house so we can have a day-to-day viewing on how the programmers are getting on, but if you appreciate the size of our operation with US Gold, Imagine and Ocean you really do have to contract out. We have up to sixty programmers contracted out at one time which is very, very tough to co-ordinate. You take *Mikie*, *Comic Bakery*, *Ping Pong*, *Yie Ar Kung Fu* — on all three machines, twelve formats in all with sometimes two people working on a title, so already there are twenty four people working on those titles alone. It's quite a difficult thing to monitor!'

Ocean's managing director, David Ward, is evidently pleased that his companies are acting as a publishing and marketing house for so many varied programmers (Ocean were heavily responsible for helping Denton Designs get going), and he pointed out that this trend is escalating. 'Increasingly we find

*"We must have programmers in just about every county in Britain."*

ourselves looking for people who like to call themselves software houses, but aren't interested in actually marketing the game. So they can be in Somerset, Scotland or wherever and we can publish the game for them. We must have programmers in just about every county in Britain.

'When we started in the old days of mail order where you put an advert in *Your Computer* and waited until the next Tuesday and hoped there would be some replies, put them in a jiffy bag and off they'd go, at that time programmers would be working in their attic after school, but now it has become far more sophisticated. We advertise for programmers and everything we send out has a little note saying "if you can write a program then contact us". So you get your little body of programmers, pay them right and they'll work for you again. First we got about twenty people aboard, and most of them stuck with us. My guess is that by Christmas we'll have about 100-120 programmers working for us, especially with now all the Ultimate games, Ocean's bigger title range and Imagine's arcade label. You see, while we're open for people to be able to walk in the door we're always open for new ideas. The programmers and coders are the creative aspect of the industry — anyone can go around licencing titles. What you have to have at the end of the day is some sort of intellectual property which we then publish.'

But licenced arcade conversions bring with them their own problems, as Colin pointed out. 'The hardest thing is reference — for example *Yie Ar Kung Fu* was referenced directly from the arcade machine. So you start off with your two in-house guys on the Spectrum and 64 and then you've got to take an arcade machine somewhere to allow a freelance to program the game. This is exactly the case with *Green Beret*, the next one in the Konami range. That's a super product by the way. The Amstrad version is being done in Scotland by our faithful chap who did *Yie Ar Kung Fu*. He's only thirteen and we're keeping him under wraps at the moment!'

A happy mixture of Imagine and Ocean in-house programmers. If you think it's difficult operating a load of proggers, have sympathy for the poor photographer having to get this lot in one space at one time!

*"We've never been really strong on the Amstrad in-house so here comes along this young genius and we couldn't really believe it — we did somersaults down the office!"*

*Yie Ar Kung Fu* was very late in coming out. Were there problems? 'We'd contracted the Amstrad version out to our friend in Scotland and we saw immediately that the guy had oodles of talent and we were very excited. We've never been really strong on the Amstrad in-house so here comes along this young genius and we couldn't really believe it — we did somersaults down the office! But I was disappointed with the Amstrad version of *Hypersports*, it was a case that when you have a blockbuster you should really capitalise on the success of the other formats, but I felt that the title was weak. Again, the tragic thing with co-ordinating contracted programmers and our in-house team, we were seven months behind with *Yie Ar*, but the story had a happy ending.'

How about *Knight Rider* and *Street Hawk* — where are they?

'With a conversion you designate three months, give or take a few weeks, and, unless there's a major bug found, twelve weeks usually suffice. The guy who was doing it spent three months, then four, then five. Now, what do you do as a commercial company? What happens is that you have to gear your advertising to the date that the programmer tells you. You go up and book X amount of space in magazines, and you've got the programmer sitting there and you say, "do you promise that the game is going to be finished by then?" and he says, "no problem." What are you supposed to do? There are only a limited amount of carrots that you can dangle in front of them. Take the programmer of *Hypersports*. He was so pissed off with it that he just never wanted to see it again as long as he lived. He asked to be taken off it so we'd now lost four months. You then throw it at somebody else, but you know what it's like with other people's coding — you just have to start again which is exactly what happened. Now the three months turn into several which doesn't do the company or our image or relationship with the big stores one iota of good. We're always very susceptible to this sort of situation. *Knight Rider* and *Street Hawk* were the same. Amstrad *Frankie* is late, that's the sort of roundabout you're on. Look at our Amstrad schedule for Easter: *Frankie, Ping Pong, Superbowl, Batman, Movie, V, Green Beret, Knight Rider, They Sold a Million II* and *Street Hawk*! As you can see, it's quite a task really, but we'll pull through!'

With so many arcade conversions being done both in-house and outside, when I asked Colin how free the programmers are in interpreting the originals, he was quite firm. 'We're not allowed to be distracted from the original. We do have to follow the program exactly and can't say, "this is a little weak in this section let's change it".'

I was surprised at that, and asked eagerly whether the programmers ever felt tied down by this rather hefty ruling?

*'We can't produce a game until they (Konami) have looked at it. It can have you sitting on the edge of your seat in fact!'*

'Yes, they do. The contract that we have is obviously very lucrative, Konami are the best for arcade programs and we're very glad to be on board with them. So if part of the deal is that you produce the product as per



Two screens from the Amstrad FRANKIE, in progress at this moment, and hopefully ready soon.

original we're pleased to do so. We're just a vehicle for converting the games to the home micro, we can't show our own expression, that's the deal. The programmers come in and say, "I'd like to do this and that," but if it distracts from the original I have to answer no. We can't produce a game until they (Konami) have looked at it. It can have you sitting on the edge of your seat in fact!'

The rights to the Konami titles are fine, but those titles won't last forever. What else is in the pipeline?

Colin explained '*Movie* (an original Spectrum game, but to be converted to the Amstrad soon) is one of those things you dream about where somebody knocks on the door with it. It's a funny story.

'The programmer originally came over to Britain from Yugoslavia to see Bug-Byte because they owed him some royalties, but when he knocked on their door it was all barred up with a sign saying closed. It was suggested to him that he should come up here to see whether we could help him out in any way and he came up with two quite abysmal products. I felt sorry for him because he didn't even have his plane fare home so I took them off him just so he could get home. They ended up going out as a freebie on the front of *Amstrad Action*. Anyway, because we'd been kind to him he felt obliged to us and we got a parcel through the post. I looked inside and said, "wow, this will do very nicely thank you!" I phoned him up and we made a deal over the phone. He's doing the Amstrad version at this very moment which is just being tidied up!'

*Movie* is the name of an original game, but to Ocean/Imagine the game is in licencing, and many of the future plans lie in film tie-ins — *Rambo* (arrived at AMTIX! Towers just too late to appear in this issue!) is a classic example. How difficult is it to grab the rights? 'I'm afraid it's a boring answer, it's a question of the strength of the guys here. If you go to the agent and say we want to produce a game we have to assure them that we're not going to bring our friend with the muscles down and because of the size of the company and the market presence you stand more of a chance pitching in and getting it than a lesser company.'

*Stallone can hardly go wrong, but Rocky IV may be a dubious prospect as a game — "It's difficult really, because it's the theme really, boxing is boxing after all."*

Colin thinks Stallone can hardly go wrong, but Rocky IV may be a dubious prospect as a game — 'It's difficult really, because it's the theme really, boxing is boxing after all.'

Licenced products seem to be expensive to produce and market, obviously money is required as well as a market position, and recently Ocean/Imagine have faced some tough opposition. I wondered whether Colin saw a battle looming with other giants like British Telecom, especially when it comes to paying huge sums of money to programmers. 'Very chauvinistically, I do mean this, I feel that people are looking to beat us rather than the other way round. That's why we try to offer the best kind of deals to programmers, so they will come back. Melbourne House were very successful last year, they went quiet for a period then brought out one of the best games of the year, *Exploding Fist*, and now they're major again — people just drift in and out. Hopefully we have a consistency and we're always going to be around, but we're usually too involved to be looking at what other people are doing. If somebody said that British Telecom have offered three times the money to do something then we'd say take it, and we'll see you after you've finished it. We can't afford that thing to escalate because before long we'd be paying extortionate fees.'

*"I feel that people are looking to beat us rather than the other way round. That's why we try to offer the best kind of deals to programmers."*

Compilations have recently become a market force, and as I discovered from David Ward, there are more to come. The next *They Sold a Million II* will include *Bruce lee*, *Match Point*, *Match Day* and *Knight Lore*. Does David have high hopes for it? 'It'll sell as well as the other one,' he replied confidently. 'We're planning to release three or four a year, primarily at Christmas, Easter and Autumn. Naturally the Christmas and Autumn ones will sell a lot better than the Easter one, but with four really good products at that sort of price represents really good value for someone who's just bought a computer or maybe only has one or two of the games.

'The whole justification for a compilation didn't really exist before because within six to eight months the game stopped selling just because the coding was out of date, and that was true up to about last year. Things like *Shadowfire* and *Frankie* were maybe the first products which had coding which would be relevant for the next few years. Now you can bring them out in another sort of form and they haven't been made redundant.'

So how do Ocean and Imagine see the future as far as the Amstrad owner is concerned? Colin Stokes: 'It's a very fickle industry. There are no guarantees for the software houses and there are none for the distributors, so who would be brave enough to predict what's going to happen this time next year? After *Green Beret* is out of the way, we'll take a deep breath and look again. we've got enough plans to get us through to March 1987, it's just a question of how we go about it. You're only ever as good as the quality of your games and we have to move with the times.'

*"There are no guarantees for the software houses and there are none for the distributors, so who would be brave enough to predict what's going to happen this time next year?"*

David Ward: 'We're always trying to broaden our horizons of both the type of games we sell and the age group we're aiming at so we can get the largest possible audience.'

At the moment the Amstrad seems a rather second hand machine, with material being converted from other machines most of the time. As a final question, I asked David whether he saw Ocean writing original titles for it?

'Any new machine gets into the situation where you look at software which has been successful on other machines and convert it across. I think by this Christmas, though, we'll get to the stage where titles are being developed specifically for the Amstrad. The thing is that it's the one machine on which you can sell titles throughout Europe, so we have very high hopes for it.'

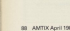

STRANGELOOP
STRANGELOOP
Virgin
250 rooms of EXPLORATION, PUZZLES to resolve and CURIOUS ROBOTS to meet, GRAPHICALLY STUNNING, full of ACTION and AMUSING encounters, this is arcade adventuring at its absolute peak. It's compatible with Amstrad 464/664/6128 machines.
STRANGELOOP
The acclaim for STRANGELOOP has been great. Here's what the top AMSTRAD MAGAZINES have to say about it:
"What is first so overly impressive is the graphic content and detail. Though of a totally different style to "Sorcery's" impressive olde worlde type of display, "Strangeloop's" presentation is just as impressive. The game is very good as well...The puzzles set are entertaining and challenging." "As soon as I saw "Strangeloop" I knew it was heading for Accolade ratings"
AMTIX JANUARY 86
"Strange name for a strange but immensely enjoyable game...has the sort of graphic excellence we expect from Virgin, as well as some really wicked puzzling that could keep you playing for weeks.
AMSTRAD ACTION JANUARY 86
"The gameplay is actually better than "Sorcery" and closer approaches the complexities of a text adventure, if this game isn't as successful as "Sorcery", then a lot of people will have missed out on a really excellent game."
AMSTRAD USER FEBRUARY 86
and for only £8·95
SORCERY
VIRGIN GAMES, 2-4 VERNON YARD, 119 PORTOBELLO ROAD, LONDON W11 2DX.
Remember "SORCERY", last year's most acclaimed title for the AMSTRAD? Well VIRGIN GAMES unrivalled reputation for AMSTRAD software is upheld again with the Gang of Five's latest MASTERPIECE.

A series of amazing games are heading our

# MIND PROBING




*Some of the dragon guardians to the other levels. Each requires different treatment and different coloured fireballs to remove them.*





## ...ur way from LUCASFILM of America, courtesy of ACTIVISION UK

**L** **ucasfilm** software subsidiary of the **Lucasfilm**, are a renowned American software house producing mega hits for the Atari and Commodore computers. Not very relevant I hear you say, well it wouldn't be if **Activision** weren't about to launch the first in a range of Lucasfilm conversions for the Amstrad computers. Number one in the line up is **The Eidolon**, a real-life game in which the routeways of your own mind are explored on screen. The story runs as follows: the obscure and reclusive **Dr Josef Agon** was one of the greatest minds of the nineteenth century. Sadly, though, his great work on the human psyche went wholly unrecognised by his peers mainly because it was far too advanced for its time (and he suffered like his contemporary, HG Wells' scientist in the *Time Machine*, through his fellow scientists disbelieving what he stated he could do).

Well Agon is long dead now, and you (you're an intrepid explorer in case you weren't fully aware) have stumbled upon the ancient mansion where, in Agon's laboratory cellar, you find the culmination of his years of toil, *The Eidolon*.

Scanning through the doctor's now faded diary it becomes clear that the unrecognised genius had created a voyaging device powered by mind energy. Seated within the Victorian globe shaped machine it is possible to travel into your own mind. What you discover in their is a number of subterranean passages populated by many strange beasties, a sort of mind's cystern. The caverns are split into seven different sections and each gate between sections is defended by a dragon-like guardian.

These guardians have no intention of letting you through to deeper levels of consciousness unless you vanquish them. Mute stone under normal circumstances, they awake into ferocious life at the mind energy pulses put out by *The Eidolon*. Scattered throughout the cave systems are power jewels of varying colours, which may be hurled at the dragons to defeat them. *The Eidolon* is a curious machine and the mind energy that powers it can be found floating along the ceilings of the strange caves in the form of spinning and glowing spheres.

The caves are represented in 3D from a personal point of view and move extremely realistically as the joystick is manipulated. The realness of the ragged cave walls is achieved by utilising a complex branch of mathematics called fractals. A fractal is a fractionally dimensional line that is the least part needed to make up a complex and real structure (I think). Fractal lines are double-plus weird and their length depends on the length of the ruler used to measure them. Strange eh? The use of this type of maths for computer games was really just the sole perogative of Lucasfilm. Since the conversions were to be done in this country the would be programmers faced quite a few obstacles. Luckily Activision UK managed to get some aid for the crack squad of coders picked for the task of Eidolon conversion. A number of video lectures on fractal maths were supplied plus a close link with the originators, Lucasfilm.

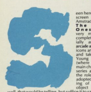
The preview version supplied to AMTIX! had all the cave moving routines in, working at a truly phenomenal rate. A separate demo showed off the various Eidolon baddies in full animation. The graphics are truly outstanding, far better than a majority of those used in many an Amstrad game. From what we've seen here at AMTIX! towers *Eidolon* does seem to be the release of 86. Just watch and wait here for a forthcoming review.

**Gary Liddon**

**LUCASFILM is the company owned by world famous film director GEORGE LUCAS. It has produced wonders like the STAR WARS movies and been deeply involved in the ultra-modern film special effects utilising computers in numerous ways at Industrial Light and Magic in California. A couple of years ago, George became interested in computer games, and funded a division of LUCASFILM specially to create new and more complex home micro games. In keeping with the strict disciplines of film production, Lucas got 'project leaders' to head up the design teams for several game ideas. To date LUCASFILM has only produced four games, RESCUE ON FRACTALUS, KORONIS RIFT, BALLBLAZER and THE EIDOLON. All of them have been big Commodore 64 hits. The first game took its name from the dimensional mathematics called FRACTALS developed by LUCASFILM to give the perspective in their games an extraordinarily realistic effect. RESCUE is being converted for the Amstrad along with THE EIDOLON, with others to follow.**

*Moving down one of the caves in your mind, courtesy of Lucasfilm's fractal mathematics. The Victorian looking instrumentation below the view screen is all essential to your success and well being.*

# THE YOUNG ONES!



een here on this page are screen shots from the Amstrad version of **The Young Ones**, which is at this very moment nearing completion. It is essentially an **'icon driven arcade adventure'** *without* icons and arcade action, and takes place in the Young Ones' house (where else?) The four main characters from the series are featured and the role of one them is adopted at the beginning of the game, the object of which is — well, that would be telling, but suffice it to say that the task set involves the collection and use of the hundred or so objects scattered about the abode.

The chosen character is moved around the screen with the joystick, although not in the conventional sense. A list of **commands** is displayed at the top of the screen, such as **WALK** and **ACTION**. Selecting the former option gives rise to a list of nearby rooms, and by choosing one it can be entered. The character then visibly walks to the respective door, opens it and walks through into the room beyond — the screen display adjusts accordingly. The **ACTION** command works in a similar manner, except a list of possible actions, such as **take**, **drop** and **open** are displayed instead of room names.

*The Young Ones* computer game should be released soon, so there could well be a full review next issue.

**Gary Liddon**

**COMING SOON TO AN AMSTRAD NEAR YOU . . .**

Rick! ꓶꓲꓶꓶꓱꓠ Mike! Vyvien!
And
special guest appearance
from SPG the hamster!

# TAKING THE ROLE

**Fairlight** appeared first on the Spectrum about the time of the last PCW Show, causing favourable comment for its extraordinary 3D graphics and its greater freedom of a role playing game. It was written by Scandinavian programmer **Bo Jangeborg**. The Amstrad version is now almost ready. The plot concerns that time honoured theme of a land robbed of good, hope, of daylight even. A hero is obviously needed — but who?

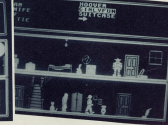
**Isvar** was an ordinary sort of fellow, and certainly not the type to see himself venturing into the terrible Castle Avars to save the land. But then came the day when he strayed into Ogri's Wood and received the call from the Sorcerer who was trapped in the castle. Isvar, it would be, who would find the Book of Light and take it to the Wizard in

S!

A quick look at Orpheus' next release, which is based on the cult television series of the same name.

*All the action takes place within the You Ones' abode, using a split level screen as different floors.*




# E OF ISVAR

## The Spectrum chart hit FAIRLIGHT from THE EDGE is almost ready . . .

*Unfortunately the reputedly 'very colourful indeed' screen shots of the Amstrad version of FAIRLIGHT failed to materialise in time for this schedule, but rather than go without, we show something from the, also almost completed, Commodore 64 version, which gives some idea of the graphics style to be expected of the finished Amstrad product.*

his cell — or he and the beautiful land of Fairlight would perish.

Which is how the game begins, with Isvar transported into the main courtyard, armed with only a sword, and already faced with a whirling elemental which will sap his strength. As Isvar moves around the castle, and one of the strengths of *Fairlight* is its total 3D accuracy so that careful mapping may give clues to hidden rooms, he'll find keys, food, hourglasses and other objects to help him in his quest. But set against him are a wealth of nasties, such as the guards who spring out of the ground, trolls and semi-transparent bubbles which wound him when they burst. There are also the 'snap dragons' — literally Isvar-eating flowers!

The castle provides a beautifully detailed and highly credible environment for the adventure that lies ahead. 'You can wonder round like you would in a real castle,' Tim Langdel of The Edge tells me, 'and while there is one key puzzle to find the Book of Light, there are different paths to it.'

*Fairlight* from **The Edge** will be appearing in a few days, and as a confirmed fan of the original, I'm sure it will be brightening the days of Amstrad owners too, pretty soon.

**John Minson**



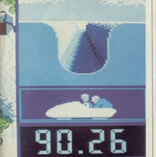
# WINTER GAMES





This realistic sports simulation certainly wowed Commodore and Spectrum owners when it was released on their respective machines. Featuring seven events, WINTER GAMES offers freestyle and figure skating, bobsledding, ski jumping, speed skating, the biathlon and hotdogging to budding athletes.

The game is in a very embryonic stage at this present time with only the backdrops, pictured here, complete. Looking at these, there's no doubt that their quality is far higher than on either of the previous versions, which holds out great hopes for the game when it's finally completed. There'll be more news as and when we get it.






# THE VIRGIN IDENTIKIT COMP

Though I may have said it many a time before, the life of a competition minion is not a happy one. Lugging mail bags up and down stairs is not fun. Sorting through near endless amounts of comp mail is not fun. Talking to the editor is not fun. Playing games, though, is fun and when it's possible to sneak off from the usual day to day grind one of my favourite games is Virgin Games' *Strangeloop*. Zipping about the alien robot factory, giving jip to various attacking meanies, it's really rather good. Along with the amazing metallic graphics and the mega sound effects, it's about the best fun a minion like myself can really have.

That is until editor and chief catches me and it's back to mail sack lugging. Ho hum. As I've said before, a comp minion's life is not a happy one. What I'd give to be a world famous machine code programmer, I can imagine the life now. Effortlessly churning out yards of complex listings, supping on the odd pint or six of Old Flatulence bitter. Gosh wouldn't mummy minion be proud. Who wrote this *Strangeloop* game anyway. **Gang of Five**, that's a strange name. I wonder who they are? Now that's a good idea for a competition.

Right what you've got to do is draw a picture of the **Gang of Five**, not an easy task due to their usual anonymity. The best five interpretations of Virgin's invisible programming team will each receive a **Virgin Quartz Watch** plus an attractively styled **Virgin Flight Bag** with a copy of *Strangeloop* inside it.
**25** runners up will get a copy of the game. So get your entries to us by the **20th of April** and we'll see about dishing out some trendy Virgin artifacts. **Please make sure your drawings are no larger than an A4 sheet (297mm x 210mm) and that you have included your name, address clearly. Whizz your entries off to: VIRGIN ON THE RIDICULOUS, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.**





## AMTIX! RATINGS DECIDE GREMLIN'S COMPILATION PACKAGE

**Gremlin Graphics** is planning to launch a series of game compilation packages for the Amstrad, Spectrum and Commodore 64, based around ratings from the three magazines AMTIX!, CRASH and ZZAP! 64. The Speccy and 64 compilations, which should be released around Easter time, will be called 'Smashes' and 'Sizzlers' respectively. The first Amstrad compilation, called 'Accolades' will appear slightly later.

Titles to be included in the packages have not yet been announced but they will all be recent hits. Ian Stewart, boss of **Gremlin Graphics**, is confident that at £9.95 they will be best sellers.

## WHEN IS A PRINTER NOT A PRINTER?

Heard the one about 50 printers in a closed van being turned away by picketing printmen in London? The van driver was ordered to take them to Pennington Street, London El which just happens to be the address of Rupert Murdoch's fortress headquarters at Wapping.

Men on duty as pickets outside the building demanded the vehicle turn round when they heard printers were on board but a closer examination left them all redfaced. The printers turned out to be the type used with computers.

The pickets quickly realised their mistake according to Barry Krite, managing director of **DataStar Systems**, one of the leading suppliers to the computer industry who admitted the laugh was later on them when it was discovered the telephone order had been a hoax!

## MONTY IN TRAINING SCANDAL

The nice Mr Stewart of **Gremlin Graphics** did promise us copy of *Monty on the Run* for this month but it ran into 'technical problems', leaving Monty Mole still training hard for his big run. For those of you who don't know, the game features a brave mole in his bid to escape the long arm of the law and the country. You must guide poor Monty through the numerous screens avoiding the nasties and collecting the treasures. A full review next month, hopefully nice Mr Stewart, please.

## MUSIC SYSTEM

**Rainbird Software** has become the first software house to come up with a music package for the Amstrad

The *Music System* is claimed to give the user a complete digital music studio. It has an editor, keyboard and synthesiser. Other features include icons, windows, and menus, 16 pre-set sounds, and a quick key guide.

The system sells for £15.95 on tape and is £4 dearer on disk. An *Advanced Music System* should be on sale in the near future.

## MOON CRESTA

This hit arcade game has been converted to the Amstrad thanks to the boys at **Incentive**. Due to hit the streets by the time you read this, the game has various phases that feature numerous aliens all to be destroyed at your will. The classic shoot em up received favourable reviews for its Spectrum version — full review next month.

## BEYOND A SHOCK IN MASS MANAGEMENT MOVE!

**In a surprise announcement this week, Beyond**'s managing director BILL DELANEY and marketing manager CLIVE BAILEY have quit the British Telecom subsidiary which was acquired before Christmas from computer magazine publishers EMAP.

1Delaney and Bailey are leaving to join **Nexus**, a development group set up by programmers **Paul Voysey** and Nigerian **Tayo Olowu**, who provided Beyond with their first real hit on the Spectrum, *Psytron*.

The resignations come after a strangely fallow period for Beyond following the company's move from the EMAP umbrella to British Telecom. A number of products announced before the BT acquisition have failed to materialise or been heavily delayed. The Delaney/Bailey move to Nexus must throw doubts on the viability of the Beyond label for BT. Both men were founder members of Beyond together with Terry Prat, one time editor of *Computer & Video Games* magazine and now EMAP's computer titles group publisher. Beyond successfully avoided the taint that might easily have been associated with a software house attached to a powerful group of computer magazines; Bill Delaney stoutly defended his company's independence. With them gone, the major force behind Beyond may well have gone also.

Nexus, backed by an international consortium comprising US Gold, Mindscapes Inc of the USA and licencees in the Benelux countries, Australia, Scandanavia and Japan, intends developing software for the world market, Nexus marketing its products in this country while its partners look after their own international territories. The first product, suitably, is called *Nexus*, a complex espionage/action game in which the player attempts to gain evidence to smash an international drugs ring. *Nexus* should be available soon at £9.95 cassette and £11.95 on disk. An expanded version is also planned for the 6128.

## Heavy on the Magick

Is the title of **Gargoyle Games**' next product. It's described by Greg Follis as a 'Fantasy Adventure with a little bit of everything in it.' *Heavy on the Magick* has a strong emphasis on Dungeons and Dragons. In it you play a 10 character high man to whom you issue commands via the keyboard and he then goes and performs them. Should your commands be a bit ambiguous then your character will translate them to the best of his abilities.

As the title suggests the game features quite a few spells. At the start you are given a number of spells but you will have to learn what they are for, and naturally they can backfire. No game would be complete without its fighting sequences so there are plenty of nasties for you to battle against, in this mode total control of the main character is handed over to you. All this in a game and much more. Wait until next month for more details . . .




## BUSY TIMES FOR NEWSTAR

**NewStar Software Limited** have just signed a deal to present **MicroSoft**'s Multiplan for the PCW8256. This 8 bit spreadsheet is on sale for £69 inclusive of beginners' guide and tutorial.

As a matter of interest **NewStar** has recently joined forces with another leading Amstrad software house, **HiSoft**, for a joint catalogue venture.

**NewStar** has also signed up with Adam Osborne's **Paperback Software** range, specifically to go for the market's jugular with VP Planner, the £99 Lotus 1-2-3 clone. The features of VP Planner include Macro creation with Autokey, Sparse matrix design, background print, and multidimensional database to link associated data.

Lastly, **NewStar** have released another word processing package, *NewWord3*, hot on the heels of a less superior system NewWord2. The latter is claimed to be fully upwards compatible with the industry standard so users can be 'up and running' straight away yet phase in the extras as they want. The package allows correct use of user areas and sub directories and it is available for CPM80, MPM, CPM86, Concurrent DOS and MSDOS.

In addition to all these goodies *NewWord3* has additional features such as in-document spellchecking, built-in document indexing, keyboard macros, a mathematical function, and site licensing schemes.

*NewWord3* is being launched at a price of £249 and according to **NewStar** managing director, William Poel, 'ought to be the hottest WP on the market'.

## Commando attack on Amstrad

**Elite Systems** is launching *Commando* for the Amstrad. It will cost £9.95 for the cassette version and 'slightly more' for the disk version according to a company spokesman. The game has already been launched for the C64 and Spectrum and has been a big success.

## BIGGLES COMPUTER GAME

**Mirrorsoft** have acquired the exclusive computer game rights for *BIGGLES- THE UNTOLD STORY*, the last film to be released in British Film Year. The film itself is being premiered on May 22 in the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The game will be ready for the Amstrad in June at a price of £9.95 for cassette and £14.95 for disk. Shown are two screen shots from the Commodore version of the game. They show some of the locations in the game. The sprites are there but not in any meaningful position as the gameplay is still in the process of being programmed.

*Biggles-The Computer Game* is in several parts, each related to a particular sequence of events in the film. Each must be completed before the next can be finished but it is nowhere near as straightforward as it sounds. Although the game will contain a certain amount of airborne activity it's not yet another flight simulator. The film time warps between 'today' and World War I and several different types of classic gameplay feature in the different parts of the game following the structure of the movie, culminating in the final destruction of the German secret weapon which could have changed the course of history.

The completed game will be the result of a unique collaboration between **Mirrorsoft** and three software developers, Dalali Software, H & H Software, and Mr Micro.

## ACTIVISION ACTIVATED

**Activision** has announced plans to acquire most of the assets of **Gamestar Inc.**, a California based developer of sophisticated sports software for personal and home computers.

**Activision** plans to invest in expanding the range and depth of **Gamestar**'s sports catalogue and will utilise, for **Gamestar** software, its full range of worldwide distribution and marketing capabilities. Activision has manufactured and distributed the American company's products for more then 18 months.

The Santa Barbara company's successful titles include *Star League Baseball*, and best selling *Barry McGuigan World Championship Boxing*.

Activision in America has also announced a merging of interests with successful disk-based adventure producers **Infocom**, including a worldwide distribution deal. Hopefully this will see a wider promotion of the excellent Infocom games in Britain.



## FIREBIRD BUG HITS ELITE

**Firebird** are having to replace an estimated 6,000 copies of their Amstrad version of *Elite* because of a bug. The game, which has only recently been launched, locks up after a couple of hours play. According to a spokesman for the company about 15,000 units have been shipped out to distributors of which 9,000 are estimated to be still on sale.

Marketing manager, **Phil Pratt**, said he was very disappointed. The company had spent considerable time testing the product for bugs. All the copies not sent out were being destroyed, and in an attempt to keep customers happy Firebird has asked purchasers of the game to return just the cassette direct to the company using the freepost system. 'We shall send them a replacement game and also a £2 voucher which can be used against the price of any other **Firebird** game,' he said.

Commodore and Spectrum versions of the game suffered no such problems. The voucher offer indicates Firebird's committment to ensuring the classic *Elite*'s success with games players.

# SWEET SUGAR HOLDS ON 8512 LAUNCH

Amstrad's new computer products now seem unlikely to appear until the second half of this year. Chairman, Alan Sugar, reporting on the company's highly successful six months to the end of December, stressed the company's new computers would not arrive until later in the year and would not affect the three existing product lines which currently provide over 80% of the company's business. Effectively this has put a block on rumours that the PCW 8512 would be appearing in the Spring.

In the six months to the end of 85 Amstrad Consumer Electronics profits went up to £27.5 million, which effectively meant the company made over £7 million more in this period than in the 12 months to June 85.

One important result of the high profit return for the company was an immediate increase in the value of the company's shares which in turn meant Mr Sugar's personal fortune soared by many millions of pounds in a matter of hours.

As yet no definite information is available about the 8512 but Mr Sugar has been quoted as saying there were no plans to change the existing products in the near future and there was no intention to phase out either the 464 or 6128.

The amazing success of the PCW 8256, or 'Joyce' as she's better known, has resulted in it capturing over one fifth of the company's business, not surprising to us at AMTIX! as we've already bought seven of them for producing the magazine (who needs writers)?

Amstrad's overseas business has also boomed and now accounts for over half the company's output. Demand has been high in both France and Spain and the United States would appear to be the country where the growth potential is greatest. Certainly the company's sales forecast to June is healthy with even Mr Sugar conceding that the City's forecast of the company's full year profits approaching £50 million is a fair estimation.

## ARNOR'S New Products

ROM based software pioneers, **Arnor Limited**, have announced the release of two new products for the Amstrad range. The two titles, *Prospell* and *Promerge Plus*, offer the more serious Amstrad user software for both home or business use.

*Prospell* is an extremely fast and powerful spelling checker which can be used not only with the *Protext* word processor but can also be used to check files created on other word processors including *Tasword*, *Amsword*, and *Newword*.

*Prospell* will check files at around 2000 words a minute which is fast by any standards. Options include the facility to let the program look up the correct spelling needed. It can also edit and list dictionary, find words with wild cards, and anagrams.

It comes complete with a 30,000 word English dictionary expandable to a size of over 50,000 words. Unlimited extra volumes can be created and files can be checked against any number of dictionaries. The product is available on disk for £24.95 or EPROM (and dictionary disk) for £34.95.

*Promerge Plus* completes the trilogy of the Protext package giving extensive mail merge facilities and more. This product allows all the standard features including the ability to selectively print or skip portions of text using conditions on the data. Flexible data file formats are compatible with the well established *Masterfile* database.

Many extra features have been included which will complement the *Protext* word processor. All the new routines have been designed to allow the user to utilise them from within *Protext*. The routines include the facility to continue processing at normal speed while simultaneously printing a text file; direct printing from disk; file linking, that is printing multiple files from only one print command, for example PRINT file1 file2 etc; cut and paste enhancements; direct typing mode; and an on screen calculator to help with columns of figures.

*Promerge Plus* has been designed to function on the 464/664 and 6128. When used with the latter the extra memory is used to provide a massive print buffer and more text editing space. When run on the 464 or 664 all the features will still function and only the available memory will change. The product is also compatible with the expanded 464/664 using the DK Tronics 64K RAM expansion.

*Promerge Plus* is available on disk for £24.95 or EPROM for £34.95.



# AMTIX! USER CLUB NEWS

**By Malcolm Harding**

**Welcome to the regular column for user clubs and bulletin boards. The aim of the page is to allow the aforementioned to have printed space to write about themselves, offer advice and help to newly formed or planned organisations, notify others of rip offs and generally have the opportunity to sound off about anything and everything.**

**AMTIX! wants to hear from user clubs the length and breadth of Britain and indeed we will also welcome organisations from abroad. Write and tell us how, why and when you set up the club, its aims, when and where it meets, how many members you have, any special events you may have planned for the coming year, if you publish a newsletter and if so how frequently it appears.**

## AMSTRAD NETWORK DOWN UNDER

AMTIX! is developing a world wide readership for I have just received a letter from Down Under publicising the Australian Amstrad Network.

The letter has been sent to me by **Donald Leith**, national director of the network and in it he begs space in our magazine to advertise the organisation. The letter is reproduced in full below:

Dear Sir,

This letter is intended as an open letter to all Amstrad users world-wide informing them of the existence of the Australian Amstrad Network.

The network is an informative exchange service between Amstrad User Groups and had participating groups in every state of Australia including the ACT and NT. The service is free, the costs being born by the directors, of which there is one in each state, the only criteria for membership being the willingness to share knowledge about the Amstrad.

We are, at the moment, setting up what we believe to be the first National Bulletin Board dedicated solely to the Amstrad. From this will be produced a national monthly newsletter that can be downloaded by subscribers (access will be by security ROM) for which a nomional fee will be charged. Indeed by the time your readers see this letter the system will be up and running.

Through inter co-operation members already have access to information regarding RAM expansion boards, Burners, Speech Synths, RS232s, ROMs and ROM Boards, five and a quarter inch drives (the use of them as the A drive) reliability of software houses, AWA service, and back up (in some cases non existent) and much more.

We now have through the network directors personal access to over 1000 users in Australia already and through this medium would like to invite any user group, no matter their location, to join us. Inquiries are invited from individuals who are not members of a user group due to the non-existence of one in their area although individuals, who are members of groups, will not be allowed access.

The sole criteria for membership is the willingness to share knowledge and the participation in the conveyancing of knowledge of the Amstrad to Amstrad users.

Inquiries may be directed to: **AusAmNet, 534 Albion Street, West Brunswick, Victoria, Australia Pc 3055, Donald P Leith, National Director, Australian Amstrad Network.**

## SEEKING A USER CLUB

Right, I am now looking for a User Club in the Halifax area of Yorkshire. **AM Coote** has written to me asking for help in finding one. If there isn't he would like to hear from anyone in the Calderdale area who is interested in starting one. If anyone can help Mr Coote his address is 16 Matlock Street, Lee Mount, Halifax.

## AMSCLUB UNDER ATTACK

The User Club Page has also received a letter from a reader in Bristol complaining about the service, or rather lack of it, from AMSCLUB, an independent user club for owners of Amstrads.

The letter has been sent to me by **Andre P Coutanche** of Bishopsworth who first wrote to AMSCLUB in November of last year. He sent off a cheque for £5 to cover the cost of membership and to receive a 'membership kit' and tape magazine. The cheque was cleared on November 22 but nothing arrived at Mr Coutanche's home so on December 9 he wrote again and then wrote again on January 6 this year.

He wrote to us at AMTIX! a few weeks later and we took up his case. Soon after he received a magazine and cassette but there was no welcome pack, no explanation, and the cassette gave a read error when loaded and cut off halfway through. He certainly did not feel the material was worth a fiver.

AMSCLUB is run by a **Dave Baxter** from Mount Stewart Street in Carluke, Lanarkshire, and despite two telephone calls to his home Mr Baxter did not have the courtesy to contact me.

My advice to any other reader is steer clear of this organisation. Instead take advantage of a local user club!

## THE AMSTRAD USER SOFTWARE DATABASE

Amstrad User Software Database is run by Amstrad Computer Users as a non profit making club which relies on voluntary help and contributions, and has a number of aims.

The main aim is to enable members to share their ideas, efforts, knowledge and abilities with each other and beginners are always welcome.

The AUSD also try to encourage the development and availability of useful software which is user friendly, well documented and freely available (or for a small royalty charge) to members in most of the programming languages available, ie in BASIC, PASCAL, C and Z80 MACHINE CODE including those which run in CPM. The software is contributed by members and others and some of it is in the public domain.

On the educational side a collection of well structured and self documented programs is being built up which cover computing from its basic concepts to complex programming. Various other teaching programs are being developed by members in both the educational and technical fields.

For private users there is a growing collection of utilities and information programs but not much in the way of games at present. It's the fervent hope of those at AUSD that some of today's private users will become the programmers and writers of the future.

AUSD is collecting useful routines for the programmer and utility and information programs. It also offers an outlet for programs, which can include a royalty payment, and encourages constructive comments and development.

Advice and information is also available for the small business user on how low cost appropriate computing may be achieved, including help with training and software. A software information database is being built up and some members have expressed an interest in the provision of various business software packages.

A newsletter is produced and written by members which includes articles of interest, news, reviews of software contributions to the database, and a number of members' services which include:detailed members' reviews of hardware, software and publications of interest to users available either in hardcopy or as 'softcopy' on disk; a book loan/purchase service which allows established members to borrow books of interest for a small charge. Loan books can also be purchased at a reduced cost and various softbook titles are being produced on disk by members.

There is also an ADEX service which is a fast access database of items wanted, for sale or exchange; a HARDPRINT service for those without a suitable printer; DATA TRANSFER to some other formats including 5.25 inch disk and limited duplication facilities; bulk buying of low cost disks and other savings for members. Help and advice with members problems is also available whenever possible.

AUSD would like to hear from all users and anyone interested in membership. Write, expressing your interest, enclosing a SAE, to AUSD, PO BOX 11, GOSFORTH, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE3 IRP, for further information.

**That's it for another month. Keep the news coming in and if you have any photographs to accompany your story send them as well. The address is AMTIX! User Club Page, 1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ.**




# TOP TWENTY FOR APRIL




*Here it is! The latest Top 20 Chart as voted by the readers of AMTIX! The figures in brackets are last month's position.*

**1** *(1)* **YIE AR KUNG FU** Imagine
4,862,740 Robert Shepherd, Sutton-on-Sea, Lincs

**2** *(7)* **Sorcery Plus** Virgin Games
84,589 Paul Flectnoe, Otford, Kent

**3** *(8)* **Way of the Exploding Fist** Melbourne House
90,100 Stephen Eddleston, Biggin Hill, Kent

**4** *(6)* **Spy vs Spy** Beyond

**5** *(–)* **Highway Encounter** Vortex
99,890 RG Messenger, Abernethy, Perth

**6** *(3)* **Bruce Lee** US Gold
228,050 Anon, Galhampton, Yeovil, Somerset

**7** *(15)* **Cauldron** Palace

**8** *(11)* **Alien** Ultimate

**9** *(–)* **Strangeloop** Virgin Games

**11** *(–)* **Knightlore** Ultimate

**13** *(–)* **Barry McGuigan's Boxing** Activision

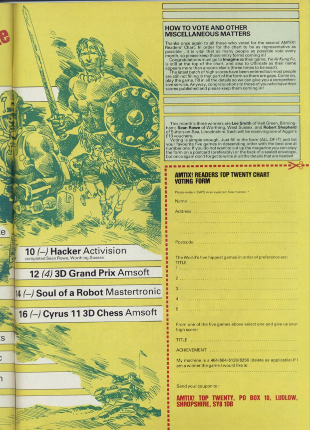
**15** *(–)* **Beach Head 11** US Gold
105,400 Martin Jones, Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire

**17** *(–)* **Southern Belle** Hewson Consultants

**18** *(19)* **Finders Keepers** Mastertronic

**19** *(7)* **Daley Thompson's Supertest** Ocean
55,630 Mark Horton, Greenford,Middlesex

**20** *(17)* **Nightshade** Ultimate




## HOW TO VOTE AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

Thanks once again to all those who voted for the second AMTIX! Readers' Chart. In order for the chart to be as representative as possible , it is vital that as many people as possible vote every month, so please keep those entry forms coming in!

Congratulations must go to **Imagine** as their game, *Yie Ar Kung Fu*, is still at the top of the chart, and also to Ultimate as their name appears more than anyone else's (three times to be exact).

The latest batch of high scores have been entered but most people are still not filling in that part of the form so there are gaps. Come on, play the game, fill in all the details so we can give you a comprehensive service. Anyway, congratulations to those of you who have their scores published and please keep them coming in!

This month's three winners are **Lee Smith** of Hall Green, Birmingham; **Sean Rowe** of Worthing, West Sussex, and **Robert Shepherd** of Sutton-on-Sea, Lincolnshire. Each will be receiving one of Aggie's £10 vouchers.

Voting is simple enough. Just fill in the form (ALL OF IT) and list your favourite five games in descending order with the best one at number one. If you do not want to cut up the magazine you can copy the form on a postcard (preferably) or the back of a sealed envelope, but once again don't forget to write in all the details that are needed.

## AMTIX! READERS TOP TWENTY CHART VOTING FORM

Please write in CAPS in an eyestrain free manner. *

Name ..............................

Address ..............................

..............................

..............................

Postcode ..............................

The World's five hippest games in order of preference are:

TITLE

1 ..............................

2 ..............................

3 ..............................

4 ..............................

5 ..............................

From one of the five games above select one and give us your high score:

TITLE ..............................

ACHIEVEMENT ..............................

My machine is a 464/664/6128/8256 (delete as applicable).If I am a winner the game I would like is:

..............................

Send your coupon to:

**AMTIX! TOP TWENTY, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB**

# BATMAN™

## THE VIGILANTE OF GOTHAM CITY

NOW YOU HOLD THE KEY
TO THE WORLD OF THE
**CAPED CRUSADER**
COMING THIS EASTER
from...

SPECTRUM 48K **7·95**




AMSTRAD **8·95**



**UPDATE:**
Marooned on an unknown world, the passengers of the wrecked liner "Arcadia" are about to perish in a ritual religious sacrifice. Since their capture they have seen nothing of Cross, the man pledged to saving them, but as the ceremony approaches its hideous climax . . .

# THE TERMINAL MAN




HOLD! NO MAN PASSES WITHOUT VILGARRE'S LEAVE!
I WILL PASS HERE— AND YOU WILL NOT STOP ME,
THEN DIE!
BUT, AS THE BLADE SCYTHED TOWARDS HIM, CROSS REACHED OUT —AND...
IMBECILE! THAT MOVE HAS COST YOU YOUR HAND— THE NEXT WILL TAKE YOUR HEAD!
BUT—
IT—IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! HE IS CUT TO THE BONE —YET HE HOLDS ON !!
UNNF!
CROSS' METABOLISM WAS A STRANGE MIXTURE OF HUMAN, VIRUS AND COMPUTER—MANGLED INTO ONE AT THE CRASH —
—HIS BIZARRE HYBRID CELLS COULD REPAIR DAMAGED TISSUE MANY TIMES FASTER THAN NORMAL —
—BY THE TIME HE REACHED THE SWORD, THERE WAS LITTLE TRACE OF THE TERRIBLE WOUND!
I SAID I WILL PASS HERE !
Y-YES-P-PASS!
STORY BY KELVIN GOSNELL©
DRAWN BY OLIVER FREY©


YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO ME, VILGARRE—
I WANT THESE PEOPLE BACK!
—AND YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT I WANT. I THINK IT IS TIME TO BARGAIN...
CANCEL THIS CEREMONY AND SPARE THE PRISONERS—FOR NOW—I MUST TALK WITH CROSS...
BUT MY LORD! YOU CANNOT STOP THE CEREMONY! THE WRATH OF THE GODS WILL BE VISITED UPON US AND—
THE WRATH OF VILGARRE IS MUCH CLOSER THAN THE WRATH OF THE GODS, PRIEST—IT ALSO HURTS A GREAT DEAL MORE—THE CEREMONY IS CANCELLED—SEE TO IT!
SOON, ON THE BALCONY OF VILGARRE'S PALACE...
SO YOU SAY THAT THESE GREAT GLOBES IN THE SKY ARE OTHER WORLDS LIKE THIS ONE—AND I COULD TRAVEL TO THEM...
YES—IN A SPECIAL SHIP. WE CAME IN ONE—BUT IT IS DESTROYED.
ARE THERE ANY MORE SOURCES OF WHAT YOU CALL 'RELICS' AS WELL AS THE SITE TO THE SOUTH?
YES, AWAY TO THE NORTH, BUT IT IS IN THE 'BURNING LAND'—FEW MEN RETURN ALIVE — ONLY THOSE WITH THE BURNING FEVER SURVIVE—IT IS A LIVING DEATH!
YOU WILL FIND ME ANOTHER SHIP—YOU WILL FIND IT WITHIN 30 DAYS OR YOUR PASSENGERS START TO DIE!
IMPOSSIBLE! WE FOUND SOME OLD SHIPS, BUT THEY CANNOT FLY!
THEN THAT IS WHERE WE START OUR SEARCH...
BUT, CROSS—EVEN IF WE SURVIVE—WHAT OF THE OTHERS—HOW CAN WE KNOW HE WILL NOT KILL THEM THE MOMENT WE LEAVE?




**Next: The Burning Land...**



MOON CRESTA
OFFICIAL LICENCE FROM NICHIBUTSU
WIN AN ACTUAL MOON CRESTA ARCADE MACHINE
PLUS HUNDREDS OF POSTERS
MGX2
MGX3
TRIP TO THE SPACE WAR!
THE CLASSIC MOON CRESTA MANUFACTURED UNDER EXCLUSIVE LICENCE
AMSTRAD
DISC £12.95 CASSETTE £7.95
TRADE AND CREDIT CARD ORDERS TELEPHONE (0734) 591678
INCENTIVE
54 London Street, Reading RG14SQ
PRIORITY ORDER FORM